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MESMERISM

AND

ITS OPPONENTS:

WITH

A NARRATIVE OF CASES.

BY

GEORGE SANDBY, JUN. M.A.

VICAR OF FLIXTON, SUFFOLK.

"All things are marked and stamped with this triple character; — of the *power of God*, — the *difference of nature*, — and the *use of man*."

BACON, *Advancement of Learning*, book ii.

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TO

CAPTAIN JOHN JAMES,

ETC. ETC. ETC.

I CANNOT dedicate this little Work more appropriately than to you, through whom I became first acquainted with the great truths of which it treats, and to whose kindness and cordial sympathy I am so deeply indebted.

Believe me to remain,

My dear Friend,

Yours most sincerely,

GEORGE SANDBY, JUN.

March, 1844.

PREFACE.

The following pages have grown out of a little pamphlet, that was published last summer, called "Mesmerism, the Gift of God."

The favourable reception of that letter by the public, and the demand for a second impression, have induced the Author, at the suggestion of several friends, to enter more fully into the subject, and to meet the various and contradictory objections that are popularly advanced.

This work, therefore, professes, not only to treat of the religious scruples that have been raised in the minds of some Christians, but to discuss with the philosopher the previous question as to the truth of Mesmerism, for a due inquiry into which, circumstances have greatly favoured the writer.

The First Chapter is little more than a reprint of the original pamphlet, in answer to the charge of Satanic agency.

The Second Chapter enters more at large into the same topic; and showing the ten-

dency of the human mind to see the mysterious in the inexplicable, proves, by example, the periodical re-appearance of this absurd accusation. The Author also examines the unfortunate mistake, which too many of his own profession are disposed to commit, be their religious creed what it may, of thinking that they do God service by depreciating his gifts; because the parties that employ them, hold opposite tenets to their own.—This feeling is shown to arise, sometimes from a zeal without knowledge, and often from that love of spiritual power, which has disfigured the brightest pages in the history of the Church.

The Third and Fourth Chapters contain an analysis of the common objections against the truth of Mesmerism. Some remarkable cases are adduced from the writer's own experience. An accumulation of other facts is given from the testimony of parties whose standing in society is a pledge for the correctness of what they state. The curative power of Mesmerism in disease is proved by induction and observation. And the medical profession is invited to a reconsideration of their unfavourable verdict.

The Fifth Chapter discusses a common opinion as to the dangers of Mesmerism; — and its fallacy is in great measure exposed.

At the request of a friend, the Sixth Chapter has examined, at some length, the bearing of the wonders of Mesmerism on the miracles of the New Testament. It is notorious, that a feeling is gaining ground that these several facts exhibit an equality of power; and that the divine nature of the one is impaired by the extraordinary character of the other. The consideration of this part of the subject necessarily led to a detailed analysis of the Scriptural events: of course, the unbeliever in the phenomena will deem such an inquiry preposterous and laughable; the Christian, however, who knows that Mesmerism is an existing fact in nature, will not regard the examination as superfluous; and even to the philosopher such an investigation *ought* to be interesting.

The concluding Chapter compares the phenomena of natural somnambulism and of Mesmerism with certain modern miracles among the Wesleyans and the Roman Catholics. The latter facts are stripped of the marvellous by a narrative of what occurred

in the house of a friend. Particular allusion is made to those wonders in the Tyrol, with the account of which the Earl of Shrewsbury, in a recent letter addressed to Mr. Ambrose Phillips, perplexed and pleased the Protestant or Romish Churches.

In the Appendix are given a few facts, taken from the history of several natural sleepwalkers, by which it will be seen that the "miracles of Mesmerism" are nothing else than certain phenomena, which have been *often* developed by nature, in the spontaneous action of disease.

No inquiry is made into the practical part of the subject, or into the system of treatment that is adopted with a patient. For information under that head, the reader is referred to Deleuze and Teste.

The Author cannot conclude without acknowledging the vast obligations that he owes to the "Isis Revelata" of Mr. Colquhoun, and to "Facts in Mesmerism" by the Rev. Chauncy H. Townshend. Those who are disposed to follow up the subject, cannot but turn with profit to the varied information that those able works afford.

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MESMERISM

AND

ITS OPPONENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PROGRESS OF MESMERISM. — OPPOSITION TO MESMERISM. — CHARGE OF SATANIC AGENCY. — SERMON PREACHED AT LIVERPOOL. — REV. HUGH M'NEILE. — EXAMINATION OF SERMON. — MESMERISM AND ELECTRICITY. — MESMERISM NOT SUPERNATURAL. — WHY GENERAL LAWS OF MESMERISM NOT STATED. — WHY MESMERIC PHENOMENA NOT UNIFORM IN ALL PATIENTS. — SERMON UNWORTHY OF MR. M'NEILE'S REPUTATION.

THE decided advance that Mesmerism has made in this country within the last two years, — the number of cautious and practical men that maintain its reality and utility, — the variety of diseases to which it has been successfully applied, — all lead the friends of truth to hope, that the public mind has taken a turn on the subject. In spite of the discredit, under which it is often

compelled to labour, through the vanity or ignorance of itinerant lecturers, the good cause is making a steady and certain progress. For it is not by public exhibitions at a theatre, that delicate experiments on the human frame can be conducted in due compliance with the conditions, which are essential to their success. Those conditions can only be fully appreciated by men, that are accustomed to the niceties, which the demonstration of the simplest phenomena in chemistry and electricity requires. The failures, therefore, that arise from the disturbing influences of a crowded audience on the nervous system of the patient, — the disgust occasioned by the disputes between the lecturer and the spectators, — the suspicion, and perhaps occasionally the detection of imposture, are constantly checking, in different quarters, that tide of public opinion that is gradually rising in favour of this science.

Still, in defiance of these drawbacks, it keeps advancing. Men almost universally begin to think that "*there is something in it*," and on further investigation they find that that small "something" is a very powerful reality. No one, not even those who make inquiries on the subject, are aware of the great extent to which the practice of Mesmerism is carried on, quietly and unobtrusively, in private families. Having corresponded much on the subject, I have been astonished at finding the numbers who apply to it

for relief. Men's minds are evidently ripening for its reception. They have clearly reached that state, in which an impression can be made. Till that state has, to a certain degree, arrived, it matters not what may be the subject-matter, no new truth can be successfully established. Be it in religion, or politics, or natural philosophy, or medicine, all the books and arguments in its favour fall unheeded on the public, till its facts and statements have been for some time well shaken together in men's minds, and other and external circumstances predisposed them towards its acceptance. No undue exertions can force this period forward, or bring it prematurely into being. Prejudice, ignorance, bad education, and self-interest will have their triumph and their day. But when once the signs of vitality have shown themselves, we may accelerate the growth. We may then hasten the progress very materially. It is my conviction that Mesmerism has at length reached this critical point; — that it has obtained a considerable lodgment among reasoning people; — and that from opportunities with which I have been eminently favoured, it is in my power to promote its establishment very essentially. It is then, the purpose of this work to combat those arguments, which are most generally advanced against Mesmerism, — to strip the subject of those marvels with which popular ignorance has sur-

rounded it, and to show that animal magnetism is nothing else than the employment of a common and simple agent, which the Supreme Intelligence has provided in mercy for his creatures, and of which nothing but prejudice or superstition can decline to make use.

I shall begin with that view of the question to which accidental circumstances more strongly, in the first instance, directed my attention,—I mean the opinion, that Mesmerism is a mysterious and unholy power, from the exercise of which good men and Christians ought to keep aloof. It is needful to make our commencement hence: for the class of readers to whom I more particularly address myself, must be first assured that the practice is neither presumptuous nor sinful, before we can expect them to study its phenomena, or be witnesses of its effect as a sanative process.

The opinion, then, of the irreligious character of this science has been mainly promoted by a sermon, that appeared in one of the numbers of the *Penny Pulpit*, and has been actively circulated through the country, entitled "Satanic Agency and Mesmerism," and which is alleged to have been preached in Liverpool by the Rev. Hugh M'Neile.

This sermon, however, was not published with the sanction of the preacher, and so far he is not responsible: but inasmuch as its sale is a matter of notoriety in the town wherein he resides;—and

as no steps have been taken by him for a disavowal of its contents, though an opening for that very purpose was good-naturedly afforded him; —and as the short-hand writer, from whose notes the sermon was printed, is ready, we are informed, to make affidavit of the accuracy of his report, —it may fairly be inferred, how incredible soever it may sound, that *this sermon*, with perhaps some little variation of language, was *actually preached* by Mr. M'Neile.

Now a sermon put forth, even in this unauthorised manner, with the *prestige* of so popular a name, certainly deserves every respectful consideration. The number, moreover, of Mr. M'Neile's admirers, and the zeal* with which they distribute this publication among the thoughtful and the religious, give additional importance to its pages; —and it having come to my own knowledge, that several parties had been prevented from adopting or witnessing the curative effects of Mesmerism, through scruples of conscience raised by this very discourse, I was

* My readers may judge of the activity with which anti-mesmerists and their emissaries circulate this sermon, when they learn that some thousand copies have been sold, and a reprint called for. It was sent, for instance, to my own house by some *anonymous* neighbours, with the intention, it is presumed, of deterring us in our course at the very moment we were receiving the most providential benefit; and it was in answer to this well-meant impertinence, and to the weak or wicked nonsense that was elsewhere muttered about a minister of the gospel permitting diabolical practices under his roof, that I was originally induced, somewhat in self-defence, to take up the subject.

prepared to bestow upon it a much more careful perusal than intrinsically it requires.

Believing, then, as I do most firmly, that Mesmerism is a mighty remedial agent, mercifully vouchsafed by the beneficent Creator for the mitigation of human misery—a remedy to be employed, like every other remedy, prayerfully, thankfully, and with a humble dependence on the will of Him who sent the chastisement, and can alone remove it,—having daily reason, too, to bless God for the introduction of this very remedy within the circle of my own family, it is difficult for me to express the amazement, the regret, the feelings akin to something like shame, with which I first read this most deplorable publication. And knowing the delusion under which so many labour on this question—a delusion which the unfortunate language of this sermon has tended so greatly to strengthen amongst the ignorant and the superstitious, I feel it to be nothing short of a sacred Christian duty laid upon me to use my endeavours to lessen the error. And if these pages should be the means of removing the prejudices of but one family, or of alleviating the pains of but one afflicted sufferer, through his adoption of Mesmeric aid, the knowledge of it would give me a gratification which I would not exchange for many of the most coveted distinctions of eloquence and power.

To much, however, of the earlier passages of this sermon no Scriptural reader can offer any

objection. Where it presents from the Bible a digest of the evidence for Satanic agency, and of the condition of the fallen angels, and of their power over the race of man; where their fearful spiritual influence on our depraved nature and deceitful hearts is laid bare in all its deformity; to all this the well-instructed Christian tremblingly subscribes. When, therefore, Mr. M'Neile is alleged to state, "not only that there did exist such a thing as Satanic agency, but that it continued to exist after the incarnation of Christ; that it continued to exist amongst men after the resurrection of Christ; that it is predicted to exist until the second coming of Christ;" to all these and similar positions I am not prepared to express any dissent. *But* when, from these premises, he goes on to assert that certain peculiar facts, recorded in *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*, and of the reality of which he does not appear to doubt, are, "beyond all question, beyond the course of nature," or, in other words, supernatural and the result of some miraculous or diabolical agency, what thinking mind does not see that such a conclusion is most illogical and absurd? Is there no other alternative? Is nothing else possible? Is nothing else probable? Before so strong and momentous a decision were thus peremptorily pronounced, should not a fair and candid man at least stoop to inquire, to investigate, to consider calmly, whether some better

explanation were not admissible? Should a lover of truth—should a friend to whatever might alleviate suffering humanity, thus hastily, and, *ex cathedrâ*, deliver an adverse opinion upon a science which, to say the least, is at present only in its infancy? If we cannot admire the reasoning faculty that this sermon evinces, can we, on the other hand, praise its charity? "In forming a judgment of this," says Mr. M'Neile, "I go, of course, on what I have read. *I have seen nothing of it*, nor do I think it right to tempt God by going to see it. I have not faith to go in the name of the Lord Jesus, and to command *the Devil* to depart." Really, any one would suppose that he were reading the ignorant ebullition of some dark monk in the middle ages, rather than the sentiments of an educated Protestant of the nineteenth century. What is this but a revival of the same spirit that called forth a papal anathema against the "starry" Galileo? What, but an imitation of the same objections which pronounced the doctrine of Antipodes as incompatible with the faith, and maintained that the theory of Columbus threw discredit on the Bible? Verily, the University of Salamanca, which opposed the dogged resistance of theological objections to the obscure Genoese, and the Inquisition at Rome, that condemned the philosopher of Pisa, might claim a kindred associate in the minister of St. Jude's! For, according to Mr. M'Neile,

Mesmerism must be "nothing but human fraud for gain sake," or something "beyond the power of *unassisted* man to accomplish." Is my brother-divine, then, so intimately versed in all the mighty secrets of Nature? Has he so thoroughly fathomed her vast and various recesses, that he ventures to pronounce everything that may be contrary to, or beyond his own knowledge and experience, as the invention of evil spirits, or the contrivance of evil men? Is there nothing new to be discovered? Are the regions of light and life exhausted and laid bare? Have we at last reached the *ultima Thule* of art and science? "*It is not in nature* for any one to bear to be so treated," says Mr. M'Neile, authoritatively; introducing at the same time and in the midst of the same sentence this evasive and contradictory exception, "*so far as we have yet learned.*" And having previously assumed the sinfulness of Mesmerism, and rather regretted that he had not "the faith to bid the *Devil* to depart," he again goes on, and says "*there may be some power in nature* .... some secret operation .... some latent power in nature, which is now being discovered .... something like the power of compressed steam .... or like electricity." *Why*, this *is* the very point in question. This *is* the very subject of the controversy. This *is* the very fact which the large and increasing body of believers in Mesmerism confidently assert. And "if there *may* be such a power in nature,"

why does he prematurely denounce it as diabolical, and the act of Satan, before the truth has been fairly and fully established? Why not wait, and examine, and patiently and prayerfully study the statements, the experiments, and the results that present themselves, and with a serious thinking spirit revolve the evidence of the whole matter, and say whether perchance it may not be "the gift of God" (Eccl. iii. 13.). "Be not rash with thy mouth (says the royal preacher), and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; for God is in heaven and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few" (Eccl. v. 2.). Surely it were the part of a wise and sober Christian, who remembereth that "nothing is impossible with God," to weigh a great and curious question like this in a humble posture of mind, and not rashly to pronounce of his fellow-men, who, for their faith and their attainments in grace, may, for aught he knows, be as acceptable with the Saviour as himself, that they are agents and instruments of the evil one! Washington Irving* tells us, that when Petro Gonzales de Mendoza, Archbishop of Toledo and Grand Cardinal of Spain, became first acquainted with the views of Columbus, he feared that they were tainted with heterodoxy, and incompatible with the form of earth described in sacred Scripture.

* Life of Columbus, vol. i. book 2.

But we read, that "farther explanations had their force," and "he perceived that there could be nothing irreligious in attempting to extend the bounds of human knowledge, and to ascertain the works of creation;" and the great cardinal therefore gave the obscure navigator a "courteous and attentive hearing." Even Mr. M'Neile, with all his Scriptural attainments, might find a wholesome lesson for instruction in the example of this great Roman Catholic prelate, when listening to the novel theories of the unknown Columbus. For, with one breath to say, that there *may* "be such a power in nature," and with another to describe men, who simply make use of that power, as those who deal with "familiar spirits," does appear the most monstrous instance of inconsistent condemnation we ever met with: it is a begging the whole question with a vengeance; it is a summary judgment without appeal; it is a decision affecting papal infallibility. And yet this competent juryman says, "I *have seen nothing of it*, nor do I think it right to tempt God by going to see it."

After certain criticising observations, however, as to the scientific character of some Mesmeric proceedings, on which we will speak presently, he refers to the well-known "magnetic experiment" of the operation for a cancer in France, which a lady underwent without feeling any pain in its progress, and mentions it as "recorded in a report made by the Committee of the Royal

Academy at Paris." And so determined is he to discover the evil spirit at work in the business, that he says—"If this be a falsehood, there is something almost *supernatural in the fact*, that we have a whole academy joining to tell the public this lie. If it be a truth, if the fact be so, then here, beyond all question, is something *out of the range of nature—out of the present power of man*, unless this is a new science." In this age of discoveries and marvels, surely a thinking mind need not deem it so very incredible, that some large addition to scientific knowledge, or even a "new science," as he calls it, should be brought to light. We have of late seen so many of the wonders of God's providence made manifest to our view—wonders, of whose existence our forefathers had not the shadow of a suspicion, that the Christian, while he contemplates them all with thankfulness and awe, might rather be expected to adopt the apostolic language, and say, "*we know but in part*," and we "see but through a *glass darkly*." "Lo!" (said the patient Job, while he was acknowledging the power of God to be infinite and unsearchable)—"lo, these are *parts* of his ways; but how *little a portion* is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?" (xxvi. 14.) But, says Mr. M'Neile, on the contrary, "*we know* what sleep is, and *we know* what pain is!" Does he, indeed, "know" what sleep is! Is he so accurate a physiologist that he is

acquainted with all its varieties*, its appearances, its modifications and actions, according to the changes and conditions of the human frame? Does he too "know" what pain is? Is he so deeply read in pathology that he is prepared to

* Does Mr. M'Neile, for instance, who so well "knows what sleep is," know and understand the nature of somnambulism? Can he explain its peculiarities or its *causes?* Yet this is sleep under one of its variations;—but how strange, and with what singular diversity of effect! Still it is not so uncommon but that most persons, at some period of their lives, have known an example or two of it amongst their neighbours; and we constantly meet with a paragraph in a newspaper, headed "*Somnambulism,*" giving a tale of wonder for the curious. As Mr. Townshend says in his "Facts," "there are many who remember to have heard tell of some sleep-walker, who has been known to rise from his bed, and to display in slumber even more than his ordinary activity, balancing himself where the waking eye would sicken. Who does not believe in the existence of such a state? Doctors have descanted upon it with the precision of medical lore; metaphysicians have examined it as a curious feature of humanity; and the light and gay, regarding it as a mere matter of amusement, have flocked to see its mimicry in dramatic representation, enhanced by all the charms of music, and the fascinations of genius." (p. 190.) Now, can Mr. M'Neile explain this state of natural somnambulism? Can he doubt its occasional existence? Has he studied its very singular phenomena? And if he have studied them, will he deny that they bear a close, nay, the very closest resemblance to the phenomena of Mesmerism,—so much so, that they appear to arise FROM THE SAME STATE OF THE HUMAN ORGANISM,—with this difference, that the former arises spontaneously, and that the latter is produced artificially by the magnetic process?

The reader is referred to that most philosophical, yet strictly practical work, the "Isis Revelata" of Mr. Colquhoun. The student, who wishes to investigate this very peculiar state, should also consult the "Traité du Somnambulisme et des différentes Modifications qu'il présente," par A. Bertrand, Docteur de la Faculté de Médecine de Paris;—a curious work, full of singular and well-authenticated facts. See also the "Instruction Pratique" of Deleuze, cap. 5.; and see also an account of a very striking case in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," art. *Sleep-Walker.*

state unerringly its effect upon the body of man under every possible contingency? Why, he himself says—"We *do not know* all the properties of matter certainly, and there *may* be some occult property in matter which these men have discovered, and which may have the effect, when applied to the human frame, of rendering it *insensible* to pain." Again, I say, this is the point at issue. Why may there not be such an "occult property in matter," the beneficent "gift of God" for the use of his creature man, without calling up a diabolical machinery to explain the difficulty? In an admonition that *he* gives to the medical profession, he quotes Shakspeare, and begs respectfully to suggest to them, that there are "more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in their philosophy." *They* might, with a beautiful propriety, fling back upon him his own quotation, and request him to apply it to this very question. A Christian minister, however, would rather go to the inspired Volume, and say—"Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words *without knowledge.* Gird up now thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding..... Have the *gates of death* been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death? Hast thou perceived the *breadth of the earth?* Declare, if thou *knowest it all.* Where

is the way where light dwelleth?—and as for darkness, where is the place thereof? That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof?" (Job, xxxviii. 3. &c.) The Almighty Father, whose judgments are unsearchable, and whose ways past finding out, hath hidden from the curious eyes of man the reasons and explanations of many of his gifts, and left us to grope ignorantly in the dark upon subjects the most familiar, and which are for ever present around us. But is this outside and superficial acquaintance with the works of nature to shut out from our remembrance the ever-present agency of the hand of God? To condemn Mesmerism as an abomination of the devil, because little or nothing is yet known respecting it, is a line of argument, which, if pressed to its absurd conclusion, would ascribe half the wonders of creation to the care and contrivance of the spirit of evil. What, for instance, is our life—the bodily life of man? In what does it consist? What is its immediate and secondary cause? What produces it—what terminates it—what gives it vitality and continuance? I believe that the best physiologists are not prepared with any positive opinion on the matter. Some consider (and with great show of probability) Electricity to be analogous to the principle of life. Some consider Electricity to be *the* principle of life. We are aware that all

nature abounds with electric matter—it is here and everywhere; perchance, under God, in it we "live and move and have our being." We hear of Galvanism and Magnetic-electricity, or Electro-magnetism, and its efficacy, through machines, upon the human body, in relieving paralysis, and rheumatism, and different neuralgic disorders. Why might not Mesmerism, or Animal-magnetism, as it would appear to be appropriately called, be Electricity under a different character?* Its

* In our present imperfect knowledge of Mesmerism, and before its facts are generally admitted, it may be premature to adopt a theory: still I cannot help expressing an opinion that electricity, under some modification or other, is the immediate agent to which the Mesmeric action must be referred. The Germans are so satisfied of this fact, that they have given to Mesmerism the new and appropriate name of "Electro-Physiology." Kant, it is well known, in one of his earlier works, gave it as his opinion, that the causes of common magnetism, of electricity, of galvanism, of heat, &c., were all the product of one common principle, differently modified. To these, of course, might now be added the immediate cause of Mesmerism. And thus we should have one simple and single principle uniting animated and inanimate nature in one common and connected operation, *a communi vinculo*. There are several facts which show this strong analogy between Electricity and Mesmerism. Here is one: the electric fluid escapes most readily from a *point*. Dr. Lardner, in his treatise, introduces several illustrations to prove this fact. He says, "the increase of electrical density at the angular edge of a conductor produces still more augmented effects at its corners: . . . . this effect is still further increased if any part of a conductor have the form of a point." (Lardner's "Cabinet Cyc." *Electricity*, p. 329.) Now all mesmerisers have found by experience that the Mesmeric medium is most powerfully conducted by the *tips of the fingers*, analogously to Lardner's illustrations. In regard to the resemblance between animal magnetism and mineral magnetism, I have seen, over and over again, the hand and head of the sleeper following the hand of the mesmeriser, in the same way as the needle follows the loadstone. This subject is treated most ably in the Rev. Chauncy Townshend's admirable work

results are often the same, or rather very similar. Why might not the electric fluid of the operator unite itself under various modifications with the electric fluid of the patient, and thus act with a curative influence upon the principle of life within us? It is Mr. M'Neile himself, who in this very sermon has referred to Electricity, and to the shock of the Galvanic battery; and I would, therefore, just remind him, that in the study of this very subject there is yet much darkness; that there is yet much to learn; that we do not yet know how far its action is connected with the principle of life—and certainly we would defy him to prove that Mesmerism or Animal-magnetism is not an essential portion of the system.

And this brings us to Mr. M'Neile's main argument, upon which he appears to plume himself most confidently, for he repeats it over and over again under various phases: — "I would wish (says he) that the professors of this science should state the *laws of nature* by the *uniform action* of which this thing is done.....Let them put forward the elements of the science in a scientific manner.....It belongs to philosophers, who are honest men, and who make any discovery of this kind, to state the uniform action.....We hear of these experiments—but hear nothing of a scien-

"Facts in Mesmerism," in the chapter on the Mesmeric medium. See also Colquhoun's "Isis Revelata." See also a clever letter in No. li. p. 169. of "The People's Phrenological Journal," by Mr. F. S. Merryweather.

tific statement of the laws.....Let us have the laws of the science.....I consider that no Christian person ought to go near any of these meetings, or *hear any of these lectures*, until a statement shall be made, grounded on a scientific assertion of the laws by which this thing is said to act." And so on *passim* to the end of the sermon.

Now this argument, perseveringly as it is repeated, may be disposed of very easily.

First, in regard to his demand, that "the laws of this science be stated" clearly and "in a scientific manner." To this there can be no objection. This is a just and legitimate challenge. Nay, we would say in his own words, "Science is open and above-board to all who will examine it — it courts examination; let us not listen to it, so long as they keep it secret, and hide the nature of it." True, most true. But who keeps it a secret? Who hides the nature of it? The believers in Mesmerism are earnestly solicitous that the most open, public, free, and full examination of the subject and its details should be constantly taking place. They invite its enemies and impugners to be present. They call upon the most prejudiced and the most partial to come with their prejudices and partialities, and witness *facts*. All they require, on the other hand, is an honest and candid conclusion out of an "honest and good heart." But are Mesmerists to be blamed for not stating the laws and principles of this system,

when they do not know them themselves? Does Mr. M'Neile remember, that Mesmerism is yet but in its cradle? That, *practically*, it has been but little known except within a few short years? In saying this, we are of course aware, that those who have looked farthest into the question, maintain that for centuries back, the Egyptians, and, perhaps the Chinese, have been acquainted with it; and that, at intervals, it has been always more or less known. To me the great wonder is, that an art within the reach of everybody, should have remained so long a secret; however, the fact is, that publicly and philosophically the system has only been recently studied. At this very moment, numbers of cautious observant men are noting down facts as they arise, with a view to a safe and surer conclusion. On the great Baconian system of induction, they are recording the experiments, the variations, the modifications, as they present themselves; and when these shall be well established, they will come to the theory. Would Mr. M'Neile have the *theory first* declared, and *the facts* collected *afterwards* to prove it. This might be convenient, but hardly philosophical. Our opponent must be content to wait patiently a few years, before his demand of having the general laws of the science scientifically stated, can be properly complied with. Mesmerism is yet in its infancy. We cannot yet state "*how* a

pass of the thumb*, or a movement of the fingers, acts on human flesh"—we cannot yet state "*how* it stops the circulation of the blood so as to resist the strengthfulness of the human frame"—we cannot yet state "*how* it prevents the delicate touch being felt in the cutaneous veins." But because we cannot yet give a scientific statement of the matter, are we to forbear its use as a remedial agent, or to ascribe these unknown properties to the "devices of the devil?" In the cognate or analogous science of mineral magnetism, the peculiar cause of union between magnetic pyrites and iron had been for years altogether inexplicable—and perhaps, with all our knowledge of electricity, is not even yet satisfactorily explained. But was the mariner to deny himself the use of the compass in the stormy and trackless ocean, or to attribute the influence of the loadstone to the contrivance of Satan, because the "*how*," and the "*why*," and the "*wherefore*" had not been philosophically accounted for? All he could say was, that the needle was guided by the finger of that Divine Being, whose ways were in the great deep, and whose footsteps are unknown. And all we can say is, that Mesmerism is the good "gift of God" for the use of his creature man, though its immediate and secondary causes are at present inexplicable—the good gift of that

* See the Sermon, p. 152.

merciful and Almighty Father, who is "always, everywhere, and all in all."

And, secondly, as to his expectation that the laws of this science should act "*uniformly.*"..... "It is a part (says he) of all nature's laws that they shall act uniformly.....If it be in nature, it will operate uniformly, and not *capriciously*. *If* it acts *capriciously*, then there is some *mischievous agent* at work." Of course in this implied charge of capriciousness, or want of uniformity, he refers to a variation of the symptoms or phenomena exhibited respectively by different patients. And in consequence of this variation, which must be admitted, his hearers are taught that the "sin of witchcraft" has ensnared the operators, and that some mocking, juggling fiend has taken possession of the patient. Now in regard to nature's laws, we at once agree that they are fixed, consistent, and unalterable. The physical world abhors "capriciousness." "Comets are regular," and nature "plain." It is for this reason that sciences are called "exact." To take an instance or two at random, we know that in the process of crystallization, certain bodies invariably assume certain specific forms; and that in electro-magnetism, the mutual attraction or repulsion of electrified substances is directly proportional to the quantity of electricity conjointly in each of them. All these facts fall under the category of general laws. And does Mr. M'Neile imagine that the laws

which govern Mesmerism are not equally fixed, consistent, and uniform, though *phenomena vary* when the *accidents differ?* Does he imagine that a seeming "capriciousness," or eccentricity, is not in reality a sure unalterable result of some unknown or inexplicable cause. We would lay it down as an unequivocal position, admitting of no exception, that where the accidents are the same, where the relative circumstances of the operator and the patient are precisely similar, the effects or phenomena would be as certain and regular as in any of those sciences termed exact. But the difficulty is to find this precise undeviating resemblance—this absence of all difference, and hence the *apparent* want of uniformity. In so sensitive, delicate, varying a frame as the human body, so subject to "skyey influences"—so affected by diet, clothing, lodging, and climate—so changed by a thousand minor incidents, could the same uniformity of action be expected as in inert matter or mechanical substance? Is it probable, that a patient, wasted by years of depletion and violent medicines, and with whom blisterings, and cuppings, and leechings had gone their round, would exhibit the same symptoms as some robust and hearty sportsman, whose constitution had been tried by nothing of the same order? Would not a diet of port wine or porter produce a very different habit of body from that created by blue pill and Abernethy's biscuits?

We are taking certain extreme and opposite conditions; but when we reflect that the circumstances of constitution, of custom, of food, of disease, admit of as many varieties as the human face divine; that these varieties form the habit of body; and that it is upon our bodies so modified, that Mesmerism acts, common sense must see that perfect uniformity of result is hardly probable. For instance, with one party, the mesmeric sleep is obtained at the first sitting; with another, not for several days or weeks. One patient recognises the hand of the operator, and cannot endure the touch even of a relative; with another, to be touched by either is a thing indifferent. One only hears the voice of the operator; another, without preference, answers any speaker. Nay, with the same patient the symptoms vary at various sittings. Still, in spite of all this, we say, that in main essential points, the resemblance or uniformity is very remarkable; that the properties, as thus developed, have an evident affinity; but if Mesmerisers are not able to lay down broad general rules, predictive of positive results, the fault is to be found in our imperfect acquaintance with a new study, in the difficulty of the science and the delicacy of the human frame, which is its subject. But is there any thing strange in this? Surely we might find something very analogous in our favourite illustration from natural philosophy. The nature of electricity, for instance, is

not so perfectly known, that a law could be laid down by general reasoning, so as to foretel of a certainty the manner in which electrified bodies would act, *in any position*, in which they might be respectively placed. Do we, therefore, say that there is no uniformity; or, as Mr. M'Neile might say, that there is no electricity, or rather, that the whole is determined by the accidental caprices of Satan? No; we answer that the distance of the *positive* and *negative* bodies being known, and no derangement arising from other or accidental causes, their uniformity of action is certain; but we add, that as philosophers could not determine a just theory of all this from the physical principles of electricity, it was necessary to proceed by observation and comparison of phenomena before the law of variation could be fully established. And so it is in Animal-magnetism; it will be by observation, by induction of various and numerous particulars, as exhibited in individuals of various constitutions and habits, that any approach to a consistent theory of action can be established. All this will require much time, and many and tedious experiments; and my own opinion certainly is, that in the operation of this system on so sensitive a subject as the human frame, it will be almost impossible to lay down specific and positive rules of its effects, in all cases, and under every modification of temperament.

And this, forsooth, is the foundation on which

the weighty charge of Satanic agency is attempted to be built! These the reasons on which Christian men are warned against going near Mesmeric meetings, or hearing any Mesmeric lectures! I would not speak with harshness of any language or conduct that appeared to take its rise from motives of piety, however misdirected; but where so mischievous a delusion has taken root, both justice and humanity require us to say, that never in the history of the human mind has an idle and miserable bugbear been created from more weak and worthless materials. If there be any thing *supernatural* in the matter, it is that a man of Mr. M'Neile's acknowledged abilities could have given utterance to such puerilities; and that when they were published, any parties could care to distribute them to their neighbours; and that when read, any single mind could have been influenced by the perusal. I have felt sometimes ashamed at encountering this solemn trifling with earnest argument—but even since this work has been commenced, I have met with several additional instances, in which a superstitious awe on the subject of Mesmerism, produced exclusively by this sermon, had seized the minds of the unhappy sufferers, and deterred them from employing a remedy peculiarly adapted to relieve them. It seems incredible—yet such were the facts; truth is stranger than fiction; and so I resumed my pen with an increased desire of doing some little

good in abating the folly. I hoped to remind the admirers of Mr. M'Neile, that powerful as he is, his power rather lies in the command of language than in the strength of argument—that he carries more sail than ballast; and, certainly, that when he scattered around him such words as "witchcraft" and "necromancy," and called down, as it were, a fire from heaven on the heads of benevolent lecturers, the minister of St. Jude's had altogether forgotten "what spirit he was of."

CHAP. II.

MESMERIC AGENT INVISIBLE. — GRAVITATION. — ANECDOTE FROM WEST INDIES. — NEW SYSTEM OF REMEDIES MARVELLOUS. — POWER OF CLERGY, AND SPIRITUAL TYRANNY. —WITCHCRAFT.—BARK INTRODUCED BY JESUITS.— INOCULATION. — VACCINATION. — SIN OF ARRAIGNING GOD'S BOUNTIES. — WHAT SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF EVIL SPIRITS. — CHARGE BROUGHT AGAINST MESMERISERS. — LINES "ON HEARING MESMERISM CALLED IMPIOUS."

DEPLORABLE as is a rhapsody like that which the last chapter examined, there is nothing new in the state of feeling, of which it is but the index. There is a tendency in the human mind to refer every thing that cannot be explained to the influence of Satan; and though this idea of the supernatural has been refuted over and over again by subsequent discoveries, men still continue haunted with the same restless fears of the mysterious, and suppose the man of science to have signed a contract with the spirit of evil. But the one thing in Mesmerism that so especially disturbs the imagination of the timid, and produces so much of painful feeling, is the fact, that the immediate agent is *invisible.* It is this that throws so mystical a character over the subject. Superstition then comes to the aid of ignorance; for when men cannot perceive all that exists, it is an

easy way of solving the difficulty, by assuming that the whole transaction is beyond the boundary of nature. "If I could but *see* what causes all this," said a fair disciple of M'Neile's one day, "I should be easier." "The devil," observes the sermon, "works here *unseen*." These reasoners require a visible patent fluid to pass before their eyes to clear the practice of its sinfulness. In demanding this, they forget that there are other agents in nature which are outwardly imperceptible. For in accordance with this argument the evil spirit must be at work in the air we breathe, and in the wind by which our navies are wafted, for it is only through *their effects* that we discern them; — and the Christian passenger should refuse to embark on any vessel but a steamship; and enter a solemn protest to the captain if he presume to consult his compass as a guide to the destined haven.

But the power that thus directs one of the extremities of the magnetic needle to the north is not the only invisible influence in nature. "We may suspect," says an able French writer*, "that there are in the world several subtle fluids, and certain concealed properties, of which we have yet no notion; and this is the reason why we find many phenomena inexplicable." But I cannot do better than give the words of a friend on this

* M. Virey, in "L'Art de perfectionner l'Homme."

subject, in one of his powerfully written letters :— "How senseless (says he) is the objection of those who demand the explanation of a cause, as though there were one power of any description that ever was or ever can be explained. We register effects, and the course of these effects; of the nature of a cause we know nothing. Gravitation is perhaps of all powers the most universal and the best understood, but who can explain this? We see the stone fall to the ground, and smoke rise up aloft, the storm rushes by, and the mountain torrent dashes over the precipice into the gulf below — but of the cause of all these various and apparently opposite effects, we know nothing — but that the power is simple and uniform; it is attraction, a sympathy between bodies, but which is no explanation. We cannot see it, for power is an action beyond the sphere of our perceptions; we know it in the effect of matter on matter, and can trace the course of these effects through all material nature, but nothing more — we observe the conditions under which each effect is made manifest, but beyond which all is mystery; of the cause we know nothing. It is the same with the phenomena of animal life which we perceive through the action of Mesmerism, the results of which are uniform under similar conditions, but vary with all the changes observable in the living body; and so far as we are acquainted with these changes, can we calculate upon the result of Mes-

meric action; and it is the same with the effects which follow in the course of every other power by which the living body is influenced; the laws of action are but the recognised material conditions under which any effects take place, and nothing more. Could we even perceive a medium of communication between acting bodies, as the wire which conveys electricity, or the air which communicates all the exquisite harmonies of sound to the sensitive nerve, or really witness a visible tangible fluid passing out from one body into another, the difficulty and the mystery would be the same; for a fluid is not a power, nor a medium of communication a cause of the influence which it communicates; these are but the different chains in the links of material appearances, which for convenience we call causation; but which in truth explain nothing; they are but means to an end, the filling up of the links in the chain. Gunpowder explodes by the near approach of flame, — but which the circumstance of the slightest damp will prevent. Now, who can the least explain these phenomena; or tell us what is light, or heat, or the nature of this repulsive power, — which is the explosion. In all matters on which we are ignorant, we should suspend our judgment; for experience alone can lead to knowledge, and the wisest of men have ever been the most humble before truth, and the most careful in giving judgment; for their experience has shown

the folly of human wisdom in giving judgment without knowledge; that knowledge which *is* power: for the ignorance of the indolent is not bliss: 'for though all knowledge,' says Lord Bacon, 'is valuable and connected, the knowledge of man to man is the most important, and ought to be the foundation of every system of education:' let us then, with pure humility and an earnest spirit, seek to know ourselves, that we may be wise unto salvation, — praising God for all that he may reveal to us, and not in the pride of intellect without inquiry, presumptuously reject the light which is from Heaven, and ascribe the ways of God to the agency of Satan."

After all, this dread of the mysterious depends altogether upon the accident of our experience. Habit reconciles us to every thing. What is as a miracle in one century, is a matter of course in another. And if our eyes be but accustomed to a particular result, though the cause may transcend our senses, it never enters into the thoughts of the large majority of men to ask whether the actual agent be unseen or visible. There is a curious story mentioned in that amusing little work, "Six Months in the West Indies," which strikingly illustrates this remark. When a steamer was first started at Trinidad, Sir Ralph Woodford took a trip of pleasure in her through some of the Bocas into the main ocean. "When they were in the middle of the passage, a small

privateer was seen making all sail for the shore of the island. Her course seemed unaccountable; but what was their surprise when they observed that, on nearing the coast, she ran herself directly on shore, her crew at the same time leaping out over the sides of the vessel, and scampering up the mountains!" This was so strange a sight that, to discover the cause, Sir Ralph went on board of the privateer, and found only one man there with a broken limb, in a posture of supplication. "He was pale as ashes, his teeth chattered, and his hair stood on end, and 'Misericordia, Misericordia,' was his only reply." The explanation at last was, that "they saw a vessel steering without a *single sail*, directly in the teeth of the wind, current, and tide; that they knew no ship could move in such a course by *human means;* that they concluded it to be a supernatural appearance,"—"and that when he himself heard Sir Ralph's footsteps, he verily and indeed believed that he was fallen into the hands of the evil spirit." Here, now, was a state of terror, as in Mesmerism, the result of novelty alone. This Spaniard had been accustomed all his life to steer his little vessel through the aid of an unseen magnetic power, and by the invisible action of the wind; and there was nothing wonderful to him in these ordinary properties of nature;—but when a ship was propelled by the means of human machinery, by paddles, and boilers, and steam that

were open to the eye, this unusual spectacle filled the poor sailors with a dread of approaching evil,—they "concluded it to be a supernatural appearance,"—while the real object of mystery remained unheeded in the cabin through the simple effect of daily habit.

The turn, however, which the fears of the superstitious so frequently take, is in an uneasiness on the subject of medical treatment, and at the application of some new and unwonted remedy. This fact can be corroborated by writers without number. It is not the disease that so much alarms, as the cure that subdues it. It is hence that the populace takes affright; on this that preachers preach, and the learned bestow their wisdom. Old Burton, in his well-known work, the "Anatomy of Melancholy," has a whole chapter on the "*rejection of unlawful cures.*" He gives us a catalogue of writers, who affirm that cures are perfected by diabolical agency. "Many doubt, saith Nicholas Taurellus, whether the divell can cure such diseases he hath not made, and some flatly deny it, howsoever common experience confirms to our astonishment, that magicians can worke such feats, and that the divell without impediment can penetrate through all parts of our bodies, and cure such maladies by meanes to us unknown." "Nothing so familiar," adds Burton, "as to hear of such cures:"—"we

see the effects only, but not the *causes* of them:" —"sorcerers are too common, who in every village will help almost all infirmities of body." "Many famous cures are daily done in this kind," he adds again, "*and the divell is an expert physitian.*" And after a little farther discussion of the question, he decides, that it is "*better to die than be so cured.*" *

Galen, who has been termed the Prince of Physicians, and whose name is as a proverb in the profession, was accused of sorcery by his contemporaries in reward for his unequalled success. "They turned against him even the credit of his cures, by the charge of having procured them through *magical means.*" † Paracelsus, his distinguished successor, was subject to the same imputation. A physician named Sennert, born at Breslaw in 1572, suspected that Paracelsus had tampered in the *black art,* and seriously asserts that extraordinary cures can only be performed by a compact with Satan. For he says, that "the devil has a competent knowledge of physic, but as all his favours and promises are deceitful and destructive to soul and body, no benefit, but much evil was to be expected." He then admonishes *physicians rather to acquiesce with resig-*

* Burton, "Anatomy Mel.," part. ii. p. 220. edit. 1632.

† "Ils tournèrent même contre lui l'éclat de certaines cures, en l'accusant *de les obtenir* par des moyens magiques."— Biographie Univer., art. "Galien."

nation in the death of their patients, than preserve them by impious means."* And the part that "enlightened" Europe has acted in regard to witchcraft is only too notorious; thousands of unhappy wretches have suffered at the stake on this accusation, not always as a punishment for a presumed injury or to gratify revengeful feelings, but in consequence of *cures effected by the simplest herbs* and through the aid of nature, after repeated failures of the faculty.

All this is melancholy enough; and a sad answer to those who talk of the dignity of human nature. But bad as it is, something worse remains behind, viz., that the clergy† of all persuasions have too generally led the van in these abominable persecutions.

Religion has been well termed, by one of our best living writers, "the medicine of the soul;" — "it is," he says, "the designed and appro-

* "Quanquam vero negari non possit Diabolum rerum medicarum satis esse peritum." — Sennert, tom. i. p. 234. De Paracelso.—See Moore's "History of Small Pox," p. 184.

† In making this statement, I seek not the worthless distinction of liberality at the expense of my wiser and far superior brethren. But there are points on which a well-known proverb must be brought to memory. Truth, especially gospel truth, ought to be dearer than factitious claims. And when religion is exposed to the scoffs of the unbeliever, through the injudicious advocacy of its own supporters, it is necessary to show that the conduct which does the mischief is no part of the system, but the reprobated superaddings of a mistaken friend. This is essentially a scientific age; and the more needful is it to be understood that there is no other hostility between religion and science than what arises out of the grossest ignorance. God's works and words speak but the same language.

priate remedy for the evils of our nature;" — but this medicine, unhappily, is not only easily polluted by the poison of superstition, but the dregs of human passion and human vanity too readily and too often mingle with the cup. The object, which the ministers of the gospel have in view, is of so momentous a nature, of an importance so above and beyond every other consideration, that it may seem, to zealous minds, almost to justify the adoption of any means towards its attainment. If the soul be but saved, what matter the process, says the carnal reasoning of the sophist. But, happily, we are forbidden by the highest authority to "do evil that good may come:" and even the salvation of sinners is not to be accomplished by unrighteous ways. Still, this golden rule of Scripture is too frequently forgotten by the young and by the ardent. Anxious to carry on the great work that is before him, — eager to enlarge the number of his proselytes, our enthusiastic teacher is not always sufficiently careful as to the quality of the argument he adopts in his persuasions. A little "pious fraud" he trusts may be very excusable. Not content with denouncing in words of gravest censure the ungodly and the vicious, — not satisfied with "reasoning on righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come," he must needs travel a little aside into the region of the doubtful and the imaginative. And if he be a man of talent as well as of energy, he soon per-

ceives the result. He sees his congregation perplexed, alarmed, and anxious. He finds out that fatal secret, — fatal I mean to the happiness of others, — the pleasure of wielding power. He learns the power of the strong mind over the weak, — of the crafty over the credulous, — of the fanatic leader over the bigoted follower. And this power once tasted, is far too delicious to be laid down: — it must now be maintained at any cost. One preacher promotes it by enforcing the most puerile and superstitious ceremonies; another by confounding things in themselves innocent and indifferent, and only blameable in their excess, with things positively sinful and forbidden in Scripture; — a third thunders forth his anathemas against the philosophic inquirer, and places on a level the man, who humbly searches into the wonders of Providence with one who is living without God in the world. And the more supple and complying that they find their people, the more exacting and progressive are they in their demands. This then is Priestcraft, be it exercised by what persuasion it may. It is that intolerable spiritual tyranny, that lording it over men's minds and consciences, which has done more injury to the pure evangelical faith, — which has more retarded the course of the everlasting Gospel, than all the writings of all the deists from Bolingbroke to Voltaire. It is in fact one of the very evils that have created deism. It belongs

not in particular to one body of Christians more than to another, though the church of Rome has been taxed unjustly with an exclusive attachment to its use. Those, however, who look into the annals of the church, and analyse the springs of human action, will find it a feeling all but universal. Pope and Presbyter, Wesleyan and Baptist, have alike displayed it. The High Church movement at Oxford, and the Free Church Schism at Edinburgh, are equally emanations of the same principle, though the accidents of their two systems may be widely opposite. Our evangelical party have, in their own peculiar way, shown the warmest predilections for this power; no men have more domineered over the weak and ignorant than have they; — and the ministers of dissenting congregations, in spite of their loud professions to the contrary, have, where the occasion has been offered them, been as little free as any from the same hateful practice. And thus have they all succeeded in spoiling the simplicity of the Gospel through "vain deceit after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ," and rendered its pure and blessed morality of none effect through their additions. But the strangest thing in the matter is the fondness of the people for wearing the yoke. Be the doctrine or discipline what it may, the laity seem always ready to receive the most monstrous statements, and to uphold the pretensions of the most ambitious, if the teachers

themselves appear but in earnest. Affection for priestcraft would almost seem an inherent principle in the human heart. *Populus vult decipi:* or as the Prophet said of old, "*the people love to have it so,* and the priests bear rule by these means." Moderation never was and never will be popular. Bitterness, bigotry, extreme and extravàgant opinions, these are the things that are palatable with the vulgar. And hence it has been that in all ages of Christianity, those who by their education and position ought to have taken the lead in promoting the claims of science, were the very parties that sought a reputation for sanctity by heading the outcry against it: and hence it is, that in the case of Mesmerism, in other towns of England besides that of Liverpool, some of the clergy have succeeded in tightening the chains with which they have enthralled the weakest members of their flock, by *second-hand* denunciations on the wickedness of the system, and by mourning over some of the most virtuous practisers of the art as the hopeless victims of satanic cruelty! *

* This is not asserted from a loose assumption. Those who disbelieve in Mesmerism, and have not given attention to its claims, have no conception of the strong language used on the subject, for the sanction of which appeal is made to the authority of Mr. M'Neile. Not many months since, I was staying a few days in one of our midland counties,—and on spending an evening with a friend, part of the family remained absent. I afterwards discovered that they refused to make their appearance, as a mesmeriser was in the room, and the conversation might turn on the practice. A short time previously to this visit, the clergyman of their parish had collected the most obedient members of his congregation together, and, addressing them in awful language,

These things are matter of history; and it may be a useful, though humbling lesson to bring forward a few instances in proof. It may encourage a spirit of caution in those who teach; it may check the leaning towards credulity in those who hear. And without alluding to the well-known examples in the study of astronomy, of geology, and other branches of natural philosophy, I shall confine myself to a few remarkable cases taken from the practice of medicine, as bearing an affinity to the curative power of the mesmerist.

I begin, therefore, with witchcraft, for the charge of witchcraft, as was before stated, too commonly arose out of the medical success of the offender; and on this point what a tale of horror has the conduct of the clergy to call up.

The persecutions for witchcraft did not commence in Europe till towards the close of the fifteenth century; that is, when what are called the dark or middle ages were rapidly passing away. In 1484, at the time of our Richard the Third, Pope Innocent VIII., in his conclave of cardinals, denounced *death* to all who should be convicted of witchcraft. The succeeding popes, Alexander VI., and even Pope Leo X., the polished and enlightened Leo, lent their aid in this fearful persecution. About 1515, just before Luther com-

entreated their prayers for some lost brethren and sisters. These lost brethren were some benevolent and Christian people who had been devoting their days and nights to the relief of their suffering neighbours. And this in the 19th century!

menced his career, 500 witches were executed in Geneva: 1000 were executed in the Diocese of Como. In Lorraine 900 were burnt. In France the multitude of executions is called "incredible." In Germany, after the publication of the Pope's bull, the number of victims stated is so portentous, as to lead to the hope that there must be some mistake in the calculation; and we are told that the clergy went about preaching what were called "*Witch Sermons*," and inspiring the people with a fanatic ardour in the pursuit.*

In England the executions were frightfully numerous, especially at the period when the Presbyterian and Independent clergy were in the ascendant. During the puritanic supremacy of the famous Long Parliament, 3000 victims suffered.

But it was in Scotland, after the Reformation, and more especially after the triumphant establishment of the Presbyterian Kirk, that some of the darkest scenes were enacted. The General Assembly passed an act for all ministers to take note of witches and charms, and over and over again pressed upon parliament a consideration of the subject. In following up the accusations, the clergy exhibited the most rancorous zeal, and were themselves often the parties who practised the worst cruelties. We may rail against Tor-

* I have abridged the above facts and figures from Combe's admirable work on the Constitution of Man, and rely on his accuracy for their correctness.

quemada and his Dominicans, but it may be a question whether the Inquisition of Spain inflicted more real domestic misery than was endured under the galling bondage of John Knox and his platform. True, there was no *auto-da-fè;* but, in its stead, there was a system of *espionage*, of informations and visitations, which carried dismay and unhappiness to every household hearth. In fact, the spiritual tyranny of the Kirk of Scotland was often intolerable. Documents show that no habits of private life were left untouched by its meddling jurisdiction. And those in the present day, who are abetting the recent Free Church measures, should well consider what they are bringing upon themselves; for there can be little doubt, that the leaders of the secession, in spite of the apparently popular character of their proceedings, are aiming at a return to the old ecclesiastical domination, and to the prostration of the purses and persons of their people, under the iron rule of an ambitious presbytery.

Some curious books have been lately published which throw a valuable light on the old conduct of the Kirk. I allude to the Miscellanies of the Spalding Club. They ought to be well studied by the present admirers of spiritual discipline. In the first volume, there is a document published called "Trials for Witchcraft," which contain no less than fifty papers relating to different trials before the kirk sessions for that offence. A

second volume is called "Extracts from the Presbytery Book of Strathbogie," in which we may read how the clergy took fearful cognizance of each action of private life, and accused and punished the "suspected" for their magical skill. A few samples may be instructive. There is a trial of poor Helen Fraser, who was convicted before the "presbeterie of Foverne," among other charges, for promising one "Johne Ramsay, who was sick of a consuming disease, to do quhat in hir lay for the recoverie of his health;" but it was to be kept secret, for the "world was evil, and spake na gude of sic medicines." Janet Ingram had also sent for Helen to *cure* her.

There is a narrative of a meeting held at the kirk of Caldstane, and a poor victim is brought forward, who was accused of calling on George Rychie's mother, and promising to take off his sickness.

Mr. John Ross, the minister at Lumphanon, and the parson of Kincardine, O'Neil, send in documents to the sessions, accusing of witchcraft nine or ten persons.

At Belhelvie, one Janet Ross is accused of witchcraft, and denies it, but she confesses to prescribing to a patient, sick of fever, an egg with a little aqua-vitæ and pepper; she had used the same for her self in her own disease.

One George Seifright is summoned before the kirk, and rebuked for consulting about his wife's

sickness, and bringing some poor woman to cure her.

Issobel Malcolme is accused of charming and curing a child's sore eye.

Isabel Haldone, of Perth, confesses upon accusation to having given drinks to cure bairns.

Three poor women are executed in 1623 at Perth for *doctoring;* and the kirk session called up and censured the parties who had sought cures at their hands.

In short, as the editor says in the preface, these charges were "generally connected with *cures wrought* or attempted for some *severe disease.*" The ignorant prosecutors could not explain what they saw: it was a paradox to them, how an old woman by the administration of simples could cure diseases, which had resisted the wisdom of the professor; and so cutting the knot, which they could not untie, they trumped up a charge of sorcery as a salvo and excuse for their own folly.

Let us come to another instance. When, in 1649, the Jesuits imported into Europe the Peruvian bark, and for this act and for their philanthropic exertions in Paraguay made atonement to society for much of that conduct which has rendered their name a proverb, the most wonderful effects were produced in Rome by its use. Geoffroy, in his Materia Medica, states, that Cardinal de Lugo and his brethren distributed *gratis* a great quantity among the "religious," and the poor of

the city. Agues and intermittent fevers were cured as if by enchantment. Geoffroy says that the cures were thought too rapid (trop prompt). And hence, as we learn elsewhere, not only did physicians interfere, but "ecclesiastics prohibited sick persons from using it, alleging that it possessed no virtue but what it derived from a compact made by the Indians with the Devil."* And thus this useful, this invaluable drug was, on its first introduction, treated as Mesmerism is now, and ascribed to the invention of the father of all evil. And of course the spiritual guides of those days thought, with old Burton, that it was "better for the patient to die," than be cured of his ague by such a remedy!

When, in 1718, inoculation for small-pox was adopted in this country, the greatest uproar was stirred up against it. Not only was the whole medical world opposed to it, but farther, as Moore tells us in his amusing work on Inoculation, "some zealous churchmen, conceiving that it was repugnant to religion, thought it their duty to interfere. * * * They wrote and preached that *Inoculation was a daring attempt to interrupt the eternal decrees of Providence.*" (p. 237.) Lord Wharncliffe, in his life of Lady Wortley Montagu, says, that the "clergy descanted from their pulpits on its impiety." Oh! if Mr. Paul and his Penny-

* See Colquhoun's "Isis Revelata."

Pulpit reporters had but been living in those days, what gems of reasoning and rhetoric might have been preserved to us! Fortunately a few *Folia Sybillina* are yet extant. A Mr. Massey preached in 1722 in St. Andrew's Church, Holborn, that "all who infused the variolous ferment were hellish sorcerers, and that inoculation was the diabolical invention of Satan."* And one of the rectors of Canterbury, the Reverend Theodore de la Faye†, perhaps exceeded this in his sermon, for he denounced with horror inoculation as the offspring of atheism, and drew a touching parallel between the virtue of resignation to the Divine will and its practice. Similar minds see similar objects under a similar view. And it is hardly necessary to observe the strong resemblance that exists between the arguments delivered in Holborn and Canterbury at the beginning of the last century to the expressions so recently uttered in the pulpit of St. Jude's at Liverpool.

When vaccination made its appearance, the same hubbub arose. Again was the medical profession up in arms; again did the pulpits resound with denunciations. Some of the clergy discovered vaccination to be antichrist. Moore, in his His-

* See a Sermon by the Rev. Mr. Massey, against the sinful practice of Inoculation. July 8th, 1722.

† A Discourse against Inoculating; with a Parallel between the Scripture Notion of Divine Resignation and the Practice of Inoculation. 1751.

tory of Vaccination, says, that "the opposition to vaccination was much more violent in England than in other countries." (p. 115.) He says again, "the imaginations of *many females* were so much disturbed with tales of horror concerning it, that *they could not even listen to any proofs of their falsehood.*" (p. 122.) The learned author of the "Principles and Practice of Medicine" says, that when vaccination was introduced, "it was said, that it was taking the power out of God's hand; that *God gave us the small-pox, and that it was impious to interrupt it by the cow-pock.* When I was a boy, I heard people say that it was an irreligious practice, and that it was taking the power out of God's hand, forgetting that it is merely *using* that power which God has given us. *Sermons were preached against it;* and handbills were stuck about the streets. I recollect seeing it stated in a handbill, that a person who was inoculated for the cow-pock had horns growing in consequence of it." (p. 479.) These now are the annals of small-pox: and thus in a few years hence, when Mesmerism shall be firmly established,—and when it will be as much a matter of course for a neuralgic patient to apply to its influence for a cure, as it is now for a mother to have her infant vaccinated, the future historian will relate, among the curiosities of the subject, that two sermons were actually preached one Sunday in Liverpool, denouncing as impious and satanic, the practice

of so simple, so common, and so natural an act as the exercise of the Mesmeric manipulations.

Truly this satanic agency is a clever actor of all work! Numberless are the difficulties that are removed by it. "All the world's a stage;" and one and the same interpretation "plays in its time many parts."

For, first, satanic agency comes forward in the character of an old woman, curing the sore eyes of a boy by an infusion of dockweed.

Satanic agency next appears in the character of a Jesuit, scowling darkly around, and curing a tertian ague by the Peruvian cinchona.

Satanic agency again appears in the character of Lady Wortley Montagu, importing inoculation from Turkey, and arresting the fearful ravages of small-pox!

Satanic agency again appears in the character of Doctor Jenner, consulting the College of Physicians, and saving myriads of infants by the process of vaccination!

And, lastly, Satanic agency appears in the character of a modern Mesmeriser, healing, by his soothing power, some of the most distressing diseases, and expelling a whole train of neuralgic pains, which had defied the skill of the faculty!

And they, who utter these denunciations, think that they are doing God service!

Rather do they throw a serious discredit on religion. Rather do they inflict on it material

disservice. They make the infidel and barren spectator laugh, and the judicious and thinking Christian grieve. They overload the Gospel with a weight that does not belong to it. They affect the mind in the same way as the legends and false miracles of the church of Rome, "in leading captive" the silliest of women through a grovelling superstition, but disgusting men of sense by their absurdity, and converting the philosopher into half an infidel. Enjoined to believe *all* these statements, men end in believing *none*. In this respect, then, these pious frauds are a mistake, if we may so speak. They do not accomplish the object aimed at. They do not increase, but rather lessen the amount of real Christianity. But they are not merely a mistake,—they are far worse,—they are positively immoral and sinful. In asserting this, we are far from singling out Mr. M'Neile as the object of our remarks. His views are but an indication of opinions that are afloat. He is but one out of many. We rather regret to see a man of his abilities lending the sanction of his name to such absurdities. He is a person of weight in the religious world; and therefore do we appeal to him, and ask,—if, in giving currency to these dogmata, he has well considered his responsibilities as a teacher. To speak of the bounties of Providence as the temptings of the evil one,—to treat a blessing as if it were a curse,—to condemn a benefit before it be examined,—

as is the wont of the religious opponents of Mesmerism, — seems to me the conduct of a thoughtless unthankful spirit. "If the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?" was the speech of the unbelieving Lord at the promised plenty to Samaria. (2 Kings, vii. 2.) "He doeth these wonders through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils," — was the answer of the hardened Jews to the works of our Divine Master: and what are the marvels of Mesmerism, — but equally the works of God, — equally flowing from the same heavenly fount as the miracles of the blessed Jesus, — the one indeed effected immediately at His word, — the other through those secondary agents of which He is the first and only source. We therefore say, that it is our DUTY AS CHRISTIANS TO SEE THE HAND OF GOD in the work, — that it is our duty to recognize so good, so merciful, so healing an influence, as a proof of the Almighty's care for his people. To do less than this argues a want of faith, and a lowering and an undervaluing of the Divine attributes. Our bodily frame may indeed be full of complicated and mysterious movements; but what is that to faith? a mystery is no mystery to the eye of faith. The Psalmist could tell us, that "we are fearfully and wonderfully made;" the Psalmist could tell us that it is God "who hath fashioned us behind and before," — that it is "God who laid his hand upon us," — and that "in his book all

our members are written." To say, therefore, that "the flesh of man's body cannot be placed in a Mesmeric state, except by supernatural means," is to show a forgetfulness of God. "Be ye sure that the Lord He is God: it is *He that hath made us, and not we ourselves;*"—we are but clay in the hands of the potter. The Divine Creator forms one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour;—he divides severally to each of us our separate qualities,—to some he gives spiritual gifts,—to others physical,—to others a union of both: "He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth,"—but whether they be gifts of grace, or gifts of nature, they all flow from Him,—for "of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things," and "by Him do all things consist."

Let not, then, the Christian misunderstand me. In thus opposing the main tenets of this sermon, do I make void the doctrine of satanic influence? Do I deny its truth? God forbid! yea, rather would I establish it. My own painful experience tells me, that in our religious warfare, we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with the unseen powers and principalities of hell, with spiritual wickedness in high places. Firmly do I believe, with Holy Scripture, that the "devil goeth about, like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." Wherever is seduction or wickedness, there is Satan in the midst of us;—

wherever is falsehood, imposture, and deceit, his kingdom reaches also ; — wherever are unjust and railing accusations against the brethren, — wherever are "lying wonders," and claims to a false and pretended power, his presence may be known ; and my daily prayer is, after the teaching of our blessed Master, to be delivered not only from evil, — but also from "the Evil One." This is a creed of which all the wisdom of this world will never make me ashamed ; — I am only anxious to place this doctrine on a scriptural and legitimate footing. With the apostolic Heber, I believe that "no slavish fears, no trifling superstition can follow from these views, when regulated by reason and by Scripture." And while, with that lamented Bishop, I think that the "notions which God's word has taught us to entertain of evil spirits, are sufficient to discredit the ordinary tales of witchcraft," with him also do I believe, that our tempters to sin are "mighty and numerous," and that the name of the great adversary is "Legion." *

But if no satisfactory reason can, after all, be advanced in maintenance of this charge of satanic agency, and that the position be abandoned as forlorn, our fanatical opponents shift their ground, in the next place, to an uncharitable imputation against the *men* themselves. The slavery of

* See Heber's Sermon on the Existence and Influence of Evil Spirits ; and a Sermon by Bishop Hurd on James iv. 7. : "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

mind must be secured at any cost; and so the world is instructed, that the thing itself must be wrong, because the creed of its supporters is dangerous and unsound. The leading Mesmerists, they say, are deists, sceptics, materialists; and what good fruit, it is demanded, can grow or be gathered from such a stock? And who are they that thus join in the accusation against the persons and principles of the Mesmeric school? Many, who in their daily habits of domestic life are visited by practitioners, entertaining and avowing the very same views. And to be consistent, therefore, they who make the charge should be careful that the rule applied to every other therapeutic novelty and invention in surgery. But granted, that their sweeping denunciation be correct, it were surely a new ordeal, wherewith to test the merits of a medical discovery. For, after all, the real question is, how can such a charge affect the truth of the science itself? If all geologists were atheists, the fact would still remain, that the imbedment of certain fossils in certain strata does determine the relative succession of the latter, and throw considerable light on the structure of our globe. If all phrenologists were materialists, the fact would still remain, that an habitual train of thought, of feeling, or of conduct does act through the brain on the external conformation of the skull, and furnish a faithful manifestation of the moral cha-

racter. And so if all Mesmerisers were deists, the fact would still remain, that that Supreme Being, who formed man out of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his soul the breath of life, did impart in his organization a sympathetic susceptibility to magnetic action, and that through this process a curative influence may be evolved of the highest value to suffering humanity. And is it, then, the fact, that this healing, this merciful power is alone exercised or adopted by the scriptural unbeliever? Shame, then, on Christians who can so neglect it! Shame, then, on men who can thus arraign the bounties of Providence, and extract from the very gifts of creation the poisoned materials for their own uncharitable assumptions! But that the disciples of Mesmer belong so exclusively to the school of materialism, if we must not call it a libel, is at least a strange exaggeration of facts. That there may be some among them, is probable; for in what department of knowledge, where a consciousness of intellectual power leads men on, has not the light of revelation been too often overlooked and forgotten? Whether it be, as Bacon says in his Advancement of Learning, that "in the entrance of philosophy, when the *second causes*, which are next unto the senses, do offer themselves to the mind of man, if it dwell and stay there, it may induce some oblivion of the Highest Cause;" whether this be correct, I know

not: but it is a common remark, that they, who by the habitual course of their studies, have been more accustomed than other men to look into the immediate causation of things, have been too generally found amongst the followers of Pyrrho and Epicurus;—but I have yet to learn, that the observation applies with greater force to the students of Mesmerism than to those of any other science. Many there are amongst them, whom no Christian community need blush to own; many, who by their faith and practice adorn the doctrine they profess;— some, with whom I have walked to the house of God in company; and all of them, with whom I am acquainted, are less deficient in that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, than those of their impugners, by whom the wanton cry is raised of infidelity and materialism.

What, then, is the state of mind with which "wise, prudent, and Christian men should meet the present state of the question?" I would not have them, from a disgust at the tendencies of this sermon, join the ranks of the infidel, and laugh to scorn the doctrine of Satanic agency, as the invention of men — holy Scripture teaches it; experimental religion confirms it; but I would have them be cautious not to confound the ways of Providence* with the works of the

* Since the above was written, I have met with a clever paper, full of curious matter, — called "Witchcraft and Mesmerism,"—

evil one; I would have them remember "how little a part" of God's wonders are yet laid bare to his creatures; I would have them look into the subject with a devotional spirit, anxious for truth, not rashly condemning that of which they are ignorant, lest haply, in their presumption, "they be found to be fighting against God." "Christian men" need not fear to be present at scientific lectures or physiological experiments, if they go in a Christian spirit. Hard words are no argument. Accusations of "morbid curiosity," and "foolish novelties," and "devilish devices," carry no proofs of their truth to the *thinking* pious believer. If he goes, he goes with prayer— he goes with the Bible, if not in his hand, yet in his heart; he goes to study the book of God's works by the book of God's word; he goes with the full remembrance that "no science can save a soul," no natural knowledge bring us nearer to God. But if, on the other hand, it be sickness or bodily pain that hath entered into the Christian's dwelling, and that his knowledge of the healing properties of Mesmerism should lead him to make experiment of its power, what are the feelings with which he would commence a trial of this unknown and unseen remedy? He would "walk by faith and not by sight." He would regard it as only one out of many thousand gifts, bountifully bestowed upon us in this life by a merciful Creator;

in the London Polytechnic Magazine, No. 2. by Dr. T. Stone. The facts therein stated are very instructive.

he would value it as a blessing sent to cheer and comfort him, when other and more customary means were failing to relieve him. He would turn to its use with prayer, with humble hope, with pious confidence; he would feel that the issue was yet with God, and the divine will would be his own. He would not, like the impious king recorded in Scripture, forget the Lord, and seek only physicians. No: the great Physician of the cross, the healer of our leprosies, bodily and spiritual, would, after all, be his main and only refuge. To Him would he look at morning, at noontide, and at the evening hour. Yea, he would feel that it was good to be afflicted, if his afflictions and their earthly remedies made him better acquainted with his own heart, and brought him to a closer and more abiding communion with his Saviour and his God!

All, however, that I have been saying in the above pages, has been so much more happily expressed in the following charming lines by that gifted poetess, Miss Anna Savage, that my readers cannot but thank me for introducing them to their notice.

ON HEARING MESMERISM CALLED IMPIOUS.

Call not the gift unholy; 'tis a fair — a precious thing,
That God hath granted to our hands for gentlest minist'ring.
Did Mercy ever stoop to bless with dark unearthly spell?
Could impious power whisper peace the soul's deep throes to quell?
Would Evil seek to work but good, — to lull the burning brain,
And linger in some scene of woe, beside the bed of pain, —

To throw upon the o'erfraught heart the blessing of repose, —
Untiring watch the eye of care in healing slumber close, —
And as the agony of grief fell 'neath the Spirit's will,
O'er the wild billows of despair breathe tenderly — Be still?
Speak gently of the new-born gift, restrain the scoff and sneer,
And think how much we may not learn is yet around us here;
What paths there are where *Faith* must lead, that Knowledge cannot share,
Though still we tread the devious way, and feel that Truth is *there.*
Say, is the world so full of joy, — hath each so fair a lot,
That we should scorn one bounteous gift, and scorning, use it not,
Because the finite thought of man grasps not its hidden source?
Do we reject the stream, because we cannot track its course?
Hath Nature, then, no mystic law we seek in vain to scan?
Can man, the master-piece of God, trace the unerring plan
That places o'er the restless sea the bounds it cannot pass;
That gives the fragrance to the flower, the "glory to the grass?"
Oh! Life with all its fitful gleams hath sorrow for its dower,
And with the wrung heart dwell the pang and many a weary hour:
Hail, then, with gladness what may sooth the aching brain to rest;
And call not impious that which brings a blessing and is blest.
The gladden'd soul re-echoes praise where'er this power hath been;
And what in mercy God doth give, O "call not thou unclean!"*

* "God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or *unclean.*" Acts x. 28.

CHAP. III.

UNBELIEVERS IN MESMERISM. — AUTHOR'S OWN EXPERIENCE. — REMARKABLE CASES. — MESMERISERS IN ENGLAND. — CURES AND OPERATIONS IN ENGLAND. — PROGRESS IN SCOTLAND — IN GERMANY — IN FRANCE — IN UNITED STATES. — MESMERISM PROVED TO BE A POWERFUL REMEDY IN PAIN AND DISEASE.

But all this train of argument appears childish in the extreme to a *second* class of opponents. It seems like fighting with the wind. A medical friend, who for his ability and various attainments in science stands by common consent among the heads of his profession, says in a letter, "It amuses me much to see two grave clergymen making a serious debate on the subject of Mesmerism." The editor of the Lancet says much the same thing; "We cannot but smile at each theologian for seriously attacking and seriously defending the practice." And a religious periodical has made a few observations on the subject, which require some little notice.

The Christian Observer* says, that they agree

* Christian Observer for September, 1843, in notice of "Mesmerism, the Gift of God."

neither with Mr. M'Neile nor with his opponent, for they believe Mesmerism to be nothing else than the result of credulity or imposture. But we will put the charge in their own language. "We believe that the work is *strictly human*,—being in part imposture for *morbid vanity* or *sordid gain*, and in part the irregular action of an excited *imagination*, &c." Dr. Elliotson was "duped by some *artful* patients, who *pretended* to respond to his magical control. We calmly say *duped*." He "exhibited his deluded or *deluding* patients, suffering or *affecting to suffer*." * * * * "In some instances the patients and exhibitors may be confederates; in others they may deceive the exhibitor; but that there is *deception* upon the *part of one* or *of both*, we make no question." Hard words these,—if not somewhat coarse and unbecoming! It might have been expected that the editor of a religious publication would have known more of that evangelical virtue, which "believeth all things, and hopeth all things" favourably. "Charity never faileth." Charity always adopts the best interpretation. Such words as "dupe" and "imposture" are easily written, and save the writers unfortunately much laborious investigation. My original purpose was to treat of the religious aspect of Mesmerism,—or rather to show that its practice was not so unhallowed as the timid Christian might deem. But in the position in which I have been placed,—and with the facts

in my possession of which I have been a witness, such a narrow view of the subject appears to be inconsistent. And when a periodical of such deserved reputation as the Christian Observer can thus encourage its readers in their error by the most unjust aspersions; when the leaders of the medical profession (for the larger part of the junior members are happily an exception) can obstinately persevere in terming this valuable discovery a delusion and an absurdity; I should be wanting in my duty towards God, if I did not thankfully announce that which I have experienced; nay, I should be even wanting to my own character among my fellow-men, if I did not show that in thus advocating Mesmerism, I had reasonable grounds for my conviction, and spoke but the words of truth and *soberness.*

It may be then desirable to state that I was an unbeliever in Mesmerism: perhaps it would be more correct to say, that I scarcely thought on the subject. A few years back I went to the Mesmeric exhibitions of the Baron Dupotet in Wigmore Street, and returned from them disgusted and incredulous: and from conversations that I subsequently held with medical men, I was led to resolve the whole appearances into "monotony," "imagination," and "nervousness." All this is stated, to show my previous state of mind. The change, then, that was wrought in me, — the change from scepticism or indifference

to earnest conscientious conviction, was no sudden hasty impulse, but the result of cautious observation, and slow and gradual in its growth. I was placed in such circumstances, that in my own despite, I was compelled to be present and witness facts. I watched them, however, with the most anxious jealousy. I trusted to my own eye-sight alone, and took nothing for granted. I have gone from case to case, and from one patient to another, and seen them all under different states of mind and body, and studied all the effects with the most unwearied diligence for months. And if plain common sense, untrammelled by the jargon of science, may be allowed to give an opinion, my conclusion from the whole is, that there is no one fact in nature more unquestionable, than that in certain conditions, hitherto unascertained, of the human body, one person is capable of producing a powerful action on the physical system of another, and that through some medium perfectly independent of the imagination of the recipient: and this position I propose to prove in the following statements.

The patient, to whom I shall first refer, had been for many years in an anxious state of health. Palpitation of the heart, severe neuralgic pains, intense continuous headaches, had been a few of the more urgent symptoms; and though she had enjoyed the benefits of the very first advice both in London and the country, and often with ad-

vantage, yet still the constitution had at length become so enfeebled as to be little equal to meet an additional shock upon the system. Let it be sufficient to state, that the worst symptoms of her case were at length fearfully exasperated. The most agonizing pains succeeded. For seven long and tedious weeks, sleep, which is "often the last to come when wanted most," literally came not at all. Opiates not only failed to ease, but even tended to aggravate. Till at last, when a crisis was rapidly approaching; when the hopes of the patient's family were almost gone;—at that moment, when it was least expected, were their prayers heard;—a change was happily obtained; a new system of treatment was adopted;—and from that hour they saw the hand of God leading them on to health and to hope; they saw a gradual steady progressive improvement setting in, attended by circumstances of relief, which no language can express.

Mesmerism was that fresh treatment: but as a few facts will throw stronger light upon the action of this newly-discovered power, we will proceed to relate certain incidents in the case.

First let it be stated that this was not a case of confidence, or where faith in a fresh remedy brings about a realization of its own wishes. The very opposite was the fact. The patient's disbelief in Mesmerism amounted even to dislike: and when the medical friend, but too much alive to the

necessity of a few minutes' sleep after such a fearful duration of wakefulness, caught at the idea of the Mesmeric action, and suggested its adoption, the proposition met with a peremptory repulse. And it was only through the firmness and intelligent explanations of the excellent friend that undertook the treatment, that this strong reluctance was at last overborne.

At the first séance, which lasted an hour, small apparent effect was produced; but on going to rest, the patient who had been in the habit of requiring the nightly aid of fomentations to lull the intolerable severity of her sufferings, lay perfectly still, and said that "the pain had been endurable." Sleep, indeed, did not visit the pillow: but much was thus far gained.

At the few next sittings sleep was obtained, — deeper too on each occasion, — and the effect of which continued after the patient retired to bed. And though this sleep was very short and much disturbed, still there *was* sleep; an effect, which for weeks "all the drowsy syrups of the world" had failed to procure. The patient soon declared that she had passed a refreshing night. All this was very encouraging, and called forth many expressions of gratitude; still nothing had hitherto occurred to convince me that the monotony of the passes was not the producing cause, — nothing, that is, of an extraordinary or unusual character; sleep with a gradual mitigation

of pain were the blessed results; and we "thanked God and took courage," — and only trusted that this simple treatment would not lose its effect, as we went on.

It was about the third or fourth evening, as I was sitting at a distant part of the room, silently watching the patient in her slumbers, that my attention was suddenly arrested, by observing her hand following the hand of the Mesmeriser, as by the force of attraction. Never shall I forget the feeling with which I started from my chair, ejaculating to myself, "*there is then something* in Mesmerism." A new light burst upon me. Here was a fact which no imagination could explain;— here was a case where no collusion was possible. The act was marked, clear, decisive. In what way, the unbeliever can account for this sympathetic movement; or into what solution it may be tortured, I know not. Common sense simply replies, that here is a plain evident action, in which the eye could not be deceived. This effect too, it may be as well to add, was not temporary, but was produced daily for weeks and weeks. The hand and the head invariably moved with the hand of the Mesmeriser; and certainly in witnessing this magnetic action, we could not avoid adopting the conclusion, that the term "Animal Magnetism" was not so inappropriate.

It is unnecessary to enter further into this case, though other phenomena might be mentioned,

except to add, that the most essential benefits continued to be obtained; and that although with a patient of such an impaired constitution, a complete restoration to health was not to be expected, the action of Mesmerism has never on any occasion been employed on her behalf (and this is said after the experience of twelve months) without producing a relief and salutary effect, such as medicine fails in any measure to accomplish.

But my experience can give attestation to a very affecting case, — some of the events of which occurred under my own roof.

Anne Vials is the daughter of Samuel Vials, of the Abbey parish in St. Alban's, who formerly drove the mail cart from thence to Watford. For a short time this poor girl gained her livelihood by working in a silk factory; from the scrofulous habit of her constitution she was not always equal to full employment; — but, in 1837, when she was only sixteen years of age, — she was compelled to give up work altogether. For her mother fell sick, with a long and pining illness, under which, after much suffering, she finally sank; and during which she was confined to her bed, and required the constant presence of a nurse. Poor Anne, therefore, left her calling at the factory, — took her place by her mother's couch, and was her unwearied attendant night and day. So feeble indeed was the patient, that she could scarcely be quitted for a moment; and for a long year,

therefore, did this anxious and affectionate child sit by her parent's bed the whole night through. When death at length released the sufferer, a fatal discovery was made. The mother's disease had taken strong hold of the daughter, for the over-wrought exertions of a twelvemonth had now too clearly brought out the hereditary taint. Anne Vials in fact required a nurse herself; for not only was the general state of her health broken down, but the left arm, which for three or four years had been giving her much pain and uneasiness, became now in so diseased a condition, as totally to deprive her of its use. She was placed under the care of several medical men in succession; the best attendance in St. Alban's was provided for her; but the arm every day grew more and more painful. Through the kindness of some charitable friends, she was now admitted into different hospitals one after the other. She was first removed to Hemel Hempstead Infirmary, — thence to St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London, where she remained nine months, — thence to St. Thomas's in the Borough, and thence to Hemel Hempstead again, in none of which places did she obtain any effectual benefit. The state of her health at length became so serious, that to save her life, some decisive measures were necessary; and she was taken up to London again to Guy's Hospital, where her arm was amputated by Mr. Morgan, the 22d of March, 1841.

At the end of three months, when the wound was healed, she returned back to St. Alban's. After she had been at home some little time, a violent convulsive action commenced in the stump. This movement grew rapidly worse and worse. In fact, the stump moved up and down, night and day, unceasingly, — and much quicker, to use her own expression, than she herself could move the other arm. Her sufferings became intense, and her general health was affected in proportion. She was now removed backwards and forwards, as before, to the different hospitals, but without any relief. At the infirmary in Hemel Hempstead, they actually strapped the arm down with the hope of lessening the movement; but the confinement made it, if possible, worse, and they were compelled to unloose it. She was at length carried to St. George's Hospital; here she remained three months; her health gradually getting worse and worse, and the epileptic fits, from which she had been suffering for a twelvemonth, increasing in violence and duration; — when with the only hope of saving her life, a proposition was mooted of taking the stump out of the socket. My readers may judge by this simple fact of the desperate state, to which this poor girl had now arrived; for with her shattered health, it could hardly be expected that she should survive even for a short time so serious an operation.

Fortunately for poor Anne, she had several

benevolent friends, who, knowing all the circumstances of her history, had watched the fearful progress of her sufferings from the first; and by subscriptions and various little Christian kindnesses had done much towards lessening her load of sorrow: Mr. Basil Montagu, in particular, — that excellent man, whose long and useful life has been devoted to the benefit of his fellow-creatures, took the warmest interest in her fate; — she often went to his house; and there she received from Mrs. Montagu, that sympathy and consideration which woman alone is able to bestow. One day the thought struck both these kind friends, that if any thing could be of service to Anne in this extremity of misery, it might be Mesmerism. It was but the faintest hope, for they had but slight knowledge or belief of its power; — still they mentioned the case to their friend Mr. Atkinson, and suggested to him the idea of making a trial of what could be done.

Mr. Atkinson is not a member of the medical profession, but has devoted himself to philosophy and science. His acquirements are of the very highest order. He is well known among the advocates of Phrenology and Mesmerism; in the former science he has added much to our stock of knowledge; and in Mesmerism he is eminently successful. Whether in relieving deeply-seated pain, in arresting disease, or in subduing morbid excitement, his power is equally strange and

wondrous. He is so calm, so gentle, and yet so firm that it is a perfect study to watch him in the management of a case. — Hour after hour have I seen him with the most unwearied patience, devoting the whole energies of his powerful mind to the amelioration of suffering, watching the various symptoms as they arose, and undisturbed by any change that might occur. Never were philosophy and humanity more beautifully united. And in the instance before us, those who have the happiness of being ranked among his friends, require not to be told his answer to Mr. Montagu's suggestion. In spite of the feeling against Mesmerism, and the almost hopeless state of the patient, he at once on his own responsibility undertook the case; and seeing that it would require for months the most unremitting attention, he procured a nurse from St. George's Hospital, and had the poor girl removed to his own house.

It was in May, 1842, about fourteen months after the amputation, that Anne Vials quitted the hospital to make trial of Mesmerism; and this is Mr. Atkinson's description of the state in which he found her. "She had sometimes three or four fits in a day, of a most violent nature, which continued for more than an hour; the stump moved up and down without cessation, not a merely nervous twitching, — but violently up and down; she suffered continuous excruciating pain in the head and back, — and at the end of the stump

too the pain was most excruciating; — she had pain too in all her limbs and joints, particularly in the elbow of the remaining arm, just as she had before amputation in the other. Masses of sores were constantly breaking out in different parts of the body; palpitations at the heart, pains in the chest, — suspensions of the functions of nature, and a spitting of large quantities of blood accompanied by solid matter, were some of the other symptoms." In short, a more terrible complication of evils have seldom been united in one sufferer.

I shall leave it to Mr. Atkinson at some future period to give to the public the interesting details of his success. Let it be sufficient to state, that the process was most painfully laborious, and occupying a large portion of his time, and that she remained in his house more than twelve months. At the first few sittings the epileptic fits were brought on, as if by the Mesmeric effect, — but this prevented their recurrence in her ordinary state. At the fourth or fifth *séance*, the deep sleep or trance was superinduced, — *when the action of the stump suddenly stopped*, — and from that moment it never moved in that way again; — the fits too ceased; the pains in the back of her head were almost immediately relieved; — and a gradual improvement in her general health set in. Upon the wonderful results of the Mesmeric treatment in this case, I shall make little com-

ment; my readers can think for themselves; — they will see here a poor girl, carried to and fro from hospital to hospital, enduring the most exquisite torture, and her life placed in such a state of jeopardy, that the only hope of preserving it was recourse to a second and horrible operation. The arm was to be taken out of the socket! an effectual mode in truth, for a prevention of its movement! But from this operation was she spared by the action of Mesmerism; and by its continued and regular application was a relapse prevented, and an improvement in her health obtained. Who does not see the goodness of Providence in vouchsafing such an agent? Who can deny that Mesmerism to her was the precious gift of God? The facts of her case,— of her sufferings, — of the amputation, — of the movement of the stump, and of the other attendant evils are known to numbers, — to medical men in St. Alban's, — and to the surgeons and nurses at the hospitals; and it is also known, that all the remedies suggested for her benefit were fruitless; — the best surgical advice was of no avail: — but the fifth day, after the application of Mesmerism, the stump ceased to move, and the other fearful symptoms of the case began to disappear!

But these are not all the marvels that accompanied the treatment. With the improvement of her health the most beautiful phenomena step by step developed themselves, — so beautiful indeed

as to attract the admiration of a large number of inquiring spectators, who came to watch and study the case. She became what is called an ecstatic dreamer. Her nervous system had fallen into so peculiar and extremely excited a state, from the effects of this long and painful disease, that the Mesmeric action brought out an exaltation, and a great spiritual activity of the higher organs of the brain. And all these effects appeared spontaneously and unlooked for. Not only did she become a somnambulist,—*i. e.* not only were the common results of the *sleep-waking* state produced,—but an ecstacy,—a spirituality,—a rapt devotional feeling, such as appeared to draw a veil over the scenes of this lower world, regularly came on. To make myself understood, I will describe the effects as they occurred on my first visit. A few minutes sufficed to throw her into the trance by the simple application of the hand held over the head without contact. First, would there come a slight nervous action of the stump, which was suddenly arrested,—a peculiar movement of the eyelids followed,—the eyes closed,—and she fell back in a deep stupor. From this state she could not be aroused by any application whatsoever; she appeared insensible to pain, and to the action of ammonia, or of lucifer matches burning under her nose. After the lapse of some minutes, she began to move uneasily,—when on being addressed by her Mes-

meriser, she answered, and sat up in a sort of *sleep-waking* state, conversing freely, though unaware of the presence of strangers. Suddenly she fell back again into the stupor. In this she remained a short time; — when slowly rising from the recumbent position, and gradually lifting up her arm, and pointing as it were to heaven, she opened her eyes, looking upwards with the most intense expression of adoration. The effect was truly sublime. It approached the character of what we may conceive of the devotional rapture of the seraph. Prayer, veneration, — an admiration of the unseen world, — a contemplation of the divine and the celestial, seemed to absorb every faculty of her soul. Her features, which in her natural state are most homely, were lighted up with a spirituality almost angelic. Though she is nothing but an ignorant factory girl, and accustomed to the most menial occupations, her gestures in this state were beautiful in the extreme. In short, so striking, — so extraordinary was the whole appearance of this poor one-armed girl in her dream, — such a combination was it of the graceful and of the sublime, — that even a Siddons might have made her attitudes a study for the Drama, and Raphael himself not disdained to borrow many a hint for the highest flights of his pencil. Domenichino's Sybille in the Palazzo Borghese at Rome may give some idea of the elevated beauty of her devotions. In fact, I

cannot describe the effect better than by adding, that one of the spectators, whose name on matters of taste is of the very highest authority, after witnessing the scene walked from the house down several streets preserving the most profound silence;—and upon his companion at length inquiring of what he was thinking,—"Thinking," he answered, "of what could I be thinking, than of what grovelling creatures we are,—while that poor girl seemed a being of another world!"

Of certain important conclusions, to which this case gives confirmation, I shall speak by and by: at present my readers may doubt how far two or three visits to Mr. Atkinson's house entitle me to the character of a competent witness as to the reality of what I saw; I shall proceed, therefore, to describe some future circumstances in this history, in which I myself took part.

After a patience,—a kindness, an expense, and a labour of no small duration, and such as few men would be willing to bestow, Mr. Atkinson brought this suffering girl to a state of comparative health and comfort; all the formidable symptoms had completely disappeared; the nervous movement of the arm was cured; and there only remained at times a good deal of pain at the end of the stump, the effect probably of something that took place during the amputation. Anne Vials therefore returned home to her native town; and here we might have lost sight of her

altogether. It so happened, however, that I passed last summer in Hertfordshire. And so vivid was the impression that the touching scene I had witnessed left upon my mind, that in one of our earliest drives into St. Alban's we determined to find out our ecstatic dreamer. What, however, were our feelings on being directed to her dwelling! When last we had seen poor Anne —she was the observed of all observers;—surrounded by the scientific and the curious, there she was secure from want and toil; and with all the freshness of restored health in daily communion with the seraphic beings of her ideal world. What a contrast met our eyes! We found her in a miserable lodging in a back lane, with all the usual accompaniments of poverty. Distress was marked on her countenance. She was neatly and cleanly dressed,—but every thing else looked bare and miserable. Toil had done its usual work. A few weeks' necessary employment in seeking her daily food had brought back some old and forgotten symptoms. The stump was causing her great suffering, particularly at the extremity: the right arm was again beginning to be painful above the elbow; her health was giving way; and the expression of her features was indicative either of bodily or mental anxiety. For her father had lost his situation and was unable to contribute to her support; her Union, which piques itself upon the strictness of its

rules, refused any out-door relief; and desirous of doing all that she could, and of keeping out of the workhouse, she strained her powers of exertion beyond what nature would allow. With but one arm, her choice of employment was limited; and so she carried about the town a basket with goods for sale, the weight of which pressed too heavily on her nerves, and was bringing back her pains in the diseased parts. Had it not been for the assistance of some charitable friends, her case would have been pitiable in the extreme. We took her at once to the house I was occupying; for I determined to try how far Mesmerism, with my inferior powers and experience, would be able to check the relapse with which she was threatened. My pleasure, then, was great on perceiving all the usual phenomena successively presenting themselves. There was the fluttering of the eyelids,—the stupor, the insensibility to pain, the strange and fanciful colloquy, the manifestations of the phrenological organism, and, lastly, the ecstatic dream, with all its varying appearances,—the rapture, the prayer, the uplifted eye, the extended arm,—the bended knee, and all the usual signs of the profoundest adoration. The difference that existed between the effects produced by Mr. Atkinson and myself was this, that with him the dream was of a far more elevated and beatific character; with myself the cerebral responses to the touch

were more pronounced and striking. However, the main thing to be noticed is, that the health of the patient improved under our management;—of course her freedom from daily toil was of no slight assistance; still she was benefited by her Mesmeric sleep; the pains in the head were removed, and those in the stump greatly lessened, and a countenance of health and serenity reappeared. She stayed with us, backwards and forwards, several weeks: we had the best opportunity of judging her character; and we found her an honest, well-conducted, right-principled girl; and this opinion was confirmed by many in the neighbourhood who had known her long. But we did more than this:—we determined to sift the case to the bottom; we determined to find out how much of truth there was in these startling phenomena. Undeniable as was the benefit to her bodily health by the action of Mesmerism, there were many who thought that the subsequent manifestations of the dream were all assumed from some interested motive; and I will not conceal that some such suspicions did occasionally lurk in my own mind. But as Bacon says in one of his undying Essays, "There is nothing makes a man suspect much, more than to know little; and therefore men should remedy suspicion by procuring to know more, and not to keep their suspicions in smother." We resolved, therefore, to probe the matter thoroughly. We had

every facility for the work; leisure and retirement were not wanting; and we had no interest, moreover, in the decision one way or other. Fortunately our circle had been joined by a friend, whose varied talents and acquirements rendered him a competent judge on any philosophic question. Mr. Mitford's * inquiring mind was determined to be satisfied as to the truth of our so-called science. He assisted us, therefore, daily at each séance. In fact, he often took the principal part. In conjunction with my wife and myself, he tested the case in every possible way. Experiments of the most opposite kinds were adopted by him. It would be tedious to relate them; it is enough to say, that we repeated them over and over again, and were satisfied at the conclusion as to the only inference to be drawn. And what then was that result? That not a shadow of a suspicion even for a moment could remain as to the reality and truthfulness of what we saw; that the poor girl was an honest unpretending person; that the phenomena produced were far beyond her powers of acting either to assume or to sustain; that the force of imagination could not explain them; — that the supposition of hysteria or nervousness was only solving one difficulty by another;

* My accomplished friend, the Rev. John Mitford, the learned editor of Gray, and the author of many delightful and popular works, is the last man to sacrifice his judgment to the love of a new and startling theory. Let it be sufficient to say, that, originally a sceptic in Mesmerism, he is now a firm believer.

— and that, in short, the whole scene, strange and pregnant with mighty truths as it appeared, — was nothing else than the simple effect of this newly discovered agent, the effect of the nervous system of one human being acting on another. It is impossible to say, how strong was the satisfaction we all felt at the close of our inquiries into this most curious case. It was an opportunity for searching into truth that never might be offered to us a second time. And when the morning of our departure from the neighbourhood arrived, and poor Anne with tears in her eyes attended us to the carriage, we took leave of her with feelings of real regret, and drove away with many an anxious foreboding about her future fate.*

* It ought to be mentioned in explanation of the circumstances of distress under which we found Anne Vials, that her kind friends in London had gone to great expense on her behalf, as she was supported for some time through the benevolence of Mr. and Mrs. Basil Montagu, and subsequently by Mr. Atkinson, during her residence under his roof; and when she returned to St. Alban's, they entertained the hope that her former charitable neighbours in that place would not omit to renew their benevolent aid. But such was the strong opinion maintained by several in regard to the Satanic character of Mesmerism, that it produced an adverse feeling against the poor helpless girl. Others, too, disbelieving the powers of Mesmerism, were disposed to consider her in some measure an impostor, and assumed that her health, which had defied the skill of the ablest practitioners, had *come round of itself.* It was, therefore, to postpone to as late a day as possible her final reception into the workhouse, that the poor girl economised the alms which she had brought with her from London in as chary a way as possible. Among the friends, however, who remained firm to her, there is one who ought especially to be named. Mrs. Wilkins, of the Verulam Arms Hotel, has acted towards her with all the kindness of the good Samaritan. When staying in that neighbourhood, too,

But there is an interesting trait connected with the above story that must not be forgotten. It was in one of his annual pilgrimages to the shrine of the great father of inductive philosophy, that Mr. Basil Montagu, the admirer and follower of Bacon, — he who had written his life and published his works, first became acquainted with this suffering creature. Often would he ramble towards old St. Michael's Church, and visit the grave of that greatest of England's chancellors, — often would he traverse the ruins at Gorhambury, and press the hallowed soil that Bacon loved to tread. And never did he return from these his beloved haunts, but, Antæus like, he rose from the contact of that kindred earth, with a freshened impulse and ardour for the discovery of truth. The spirit of the master breathed on the disciple. The very genius of the place followed him to his dwelling. Of Mesmerism he knew but little: but if Mesmerism were true, it could only be established by the inductions of inquiry. Truth by experiment, — truth by careful and untiring observation, — truth, however vilified and ridiculed by the scio-

Mr. Mitford kindly set on foot a little subscription, which was most charitably responded to by some of the most influential families in the vicinity. I lately had a letter from Mrs. Wilkins (Feb. 22d, 1844), saying that the poor girl had been very ill again, but was now something better.

It ought to be added, however, that though she has often been subject to attacks of illness, and to great pain in her arm, the convulsive movement of the stump, and the violent epileptic fits, *have never returned.*

list, — was always to be searched for; and when could this truth be obtained with greater propriety than in the case of an unhappy sufferer, who dwelt within the precincts of that very ground, sacred to the memory of that vast genius, whose mind had been so impressed with the importance of inquiring into the nature of the living body. For Bacon himself, considering the knowledge of man to man the most important of all knowledge, had written on "experiments touching the emission of immateriate virtues from the minds and spirits of men, either by affections or by imaginations, or by other impressions." He seems to have anticipated somewhat of the Mesmeric discovery, when he says that it "certainly is agreeable to reason that there are some light effluxions from spirit to spirit, *when men are in presence one with another*, as well as *from body to body*." He says that there is "a sympathy of individuals, so that there should remain a transmission of virtue from the one to the other." "But," he adds, "we have set it down as a law to ourselves to examine things to the bottom, and not to receive upon credit, *or reject upon improbabilities*, until there hath passed a due examination." "Much," he says again, "will be left to experience and probation, whereunto indications cannot fully reach."* And it was in accordance with these great principles of inductive philosophy by ex-

* See Bacon's "Natural History," Century x.

periment, that the venerable Basil Montagu, whilst almost wholly ignorant of the power of Mesmerism, yet finding that the skill of the first medical men in London could avail nothing, thought that something might possibly be effected in the case of this poor sufferer, — and at all events that here was a fit subject for a trial. And how glorious was the result! what a triumph in science! What a forcible proof of the reality of the power of this newly-discovered principle in the nature of man! — And what virtuous mind shall not rejoice at such a discovery, — or deny that Mesmerism is indeed the gift of an all-wise and merciful God!

But I was also witness to a third case of Mesmerism, that occurred in my house last summer, — which is interesting, not only from the benefits that resulted to the party mesmerised, but also from the corroboration which it gives to the truth of a similar event, of which the newspapers have been lately full. I allude to the case of the sleeping boy at Deptford. James Cooke was there thrown into the mesmeric trance by his master's son, and remained in that state for so long a period, that one party collected round the house with fearful apprehensions at the dangerous condition into which he was plunged; — while a surgeon, from his apparent ignorance of physiology, deems the thing impossible, and writes a letter to the newspapers, pronouncing the whole a delusion.

The sleep, as we have since learnt from the best authority, was neither assumed nor alarming; and I am able to confirm the probability of the narrative, from the almost similar circumstances that took place in my own household. A maid-servant of the age of eighteen, — of a pallid complexion, and in delicate health, came to live with us in Hertfordshire, her mother being in hopes that country air might have a bracing effect on her constitution. But no such result was produced: she remained weak and languid and unequal to any exertion. One day Anne Vials mesmerised her; and the next morning she expressed herself as much benefited by its effect. This induced a friend, who was staying with us, to repeat the experiment. And the result was so deep and prolonged a sleep, that his endeavours to awaken her were for many hours unsuccessful; we tried every plan we had seen adopted in similar cases, and referred to different works on the subject, — but in vain. This state of somnambulism lasted for *nineteen* hours, at the end of which she awoke and was perfectly ignorant of all that occurred during her sleep. It may be as well to state for the benefit of the sceptic, that this young girl was artless and inexperienced, and perfectly unequal to acting any part, or to resist the various plans pursued by ourselves and her fellow-servants to rouse her from her slumbers. It was an interesting sight, with which some anxiety was

mingled, owing to her delicate constitution. But I have the satisfaction of stating that within a few days afterwards the beneficial results surpassed all our expectations; the bloom of health returned to her cheeks,—the blood seemed to be circulating through her veins, her whole system was renovated, and she became lively and active. In short, so great was the alteration in her appearance, that on her return to London a few weeks afterwards, her mother, surprised and delighted, exclaimed, "Matilda, you are changed indeed,—I should not have known you!"

Here then are three remarkable cases. And what is the reply of the unbeliever? That the writer is a prejudiced, incredible witness? For I pass by as unworthy of notice the common charge of deception and "morbid vanity," with simply demanding, what reason I could have for upholding Mesmerism except conviction of its truth? But I am an incompetent testimony,—it is meant; I have received no diploma from the College of Surgeons, and know nothing of the action of hysteria and of nervousness. There is a homely proverb which will admirably apply to these reasoners,—"An ounce of mother-wit is worth a pound of clergy." A little practical common sense is all that is necessary: and it is possible for an educated man,—even though he may not have received a medical degree,—to form a legitimate opinion of the appearances of Mesmerism, after a

daily observation for several months. But setting all this aside, — and for the sake of argument admitting myself to be in error and the above a delusion, are these three cases isolated ones? Is my experience a rare instance? Is nothing else producible? At this moment, hundreds and hundreds of cases, out of England alone, can be brought forward. A mass of evidence quite astonishing is in my possession. Cures and relief effected in an infinite diversity of diseases can be named. Not that it is pretended that Mesmerism is a universal specific. There are many disorders, which it does not seem to touch. There are many patients to whom it does not seem to be of use. Still a host of cases can be produced, in which a service, beyond all expression valuable, has been wrought; in which pain of the most intense agony has been removed; in which long chronic diseases have been subdued; in which sudden attacks have been mastered; — cases, too, in which medical men have been at fault, or which they had pronounced incurable and hopeless. In the metropolis alone a considerable number of Mesmerisers can be named. There is hardly a county in England, where it is not now practised. From York to the Isle of Wight, — from Dover to Plymouth, there can be produced a chain of evidence and a list of cures. Our Mesmerisers are not ignorant practitioners; — not hot-headed cracked-brained enthusiasts, but men whose standing in society is a guarantee for

the correctness of their information, — temperate, slow-judging, careful thinkers, and as little likely to be led astray by a false light as their opponents themselves. Clergymen, military men, barristers, physicians, surgeons, ladies high in rank, and men of a distinguished position in the world could all be named: their practice of the art is well-known in their respective circles; and by many I have been favoured with information that is surprising and interesting in the highest degree. The details of their respective success are so copious that they would fill a thick volume. Of course, I am precluded by the brief nature of this little work from doing more than glancing at their leading points. If I selected a few cases for insertion, the choice would be most perplexing; and if I began, I should not know where to stop. They can only, therefore, be noticed in the most cursory manner. But even with this limited allusion, and with the addition of the names of some who have previously appeared before the public, but of whom many of my readers may not have heard, I shall be able to produce, what the lawyers would call such a mass of cumulative evidence, as nothing but the scepticism of science could prevent men from admitting to be at least a startling and important phenomenon.

Mr. Atkinson, then, of whom mention has been made before, has been eminently successful in his treatment of numerous diseases, some of which

too generally defy all human skill. He has accomplished *three cures* in that most fearful of maladies, *tic doloreux:* one case was of *ten years' standing;* and the other two of several years' duration. He has cured several cases of fits, of hysteria and want of sleep, and of those determined nervous and sick headaches, which seldom yield to remedial action. He has been successful in various acute nervous pains and contractions of the limbs, in asthma, fever, long-standing cough, affections of the heart and spine, injured sight, and deafness, in melancholia, rheumatism, toothache, indigestion, and different functional obstructions. He has found Mesmerism efficacious to a most valuable extent in subduing cerebral excitement. He had a patient under his treatment, whose irritability of brain was becoming a source of much anxiety. By the application of Mesmerism every day for a fortnight all the formidable symptoms disappeared; the head became cool; the paroxysms ceased; and the functions of the brain were restored to a calm and healthy state. The efficacy of Mesmerism in maladies of this description is almost incredible. Its soothing influence has so speedy an effect. Mr. Atkinson has indeed such copious and invaluable information to communicate, that the public have reason to hope that one day he may place the results of his experience before them.

Captain John James of Dover has great ex-

perience in the practice, and has contributed much towards its full appreciation. His patients have been numerous. He has found Mesmerism most efficacious in nervous disorders; — and in several other complaints, he has greatly alleviated the sufferings of his patients.

The late Mr. Chenevix, a well-known name in the literary world, the author of a beautiful article in the Edinburgh Review on "France and England," and a man of considerable scientific attainments, as his communications in the Philosophical Transactions show, was preparing a work to demonstrate the results of his experiments and observations on 442 persons, when an acute disease suddenly terminated his own existence. In the course of six months he once mesmerised 164 persons, of "whom 98 manifested undeniable effects. There was hardly one instance where disease existed, that relief was not procured." His efforts were immense; and his success proportionate. To mention a few instances,—he cured a case of epilepsy and spasmodic pain of six years' standing in twenty-one sittings. He succeeded completely in three other cases of the same disease, and procured immense relief in eight. He cured a man far advanced in a rapid consumption. He cured seven cases of worms; and produced a most powerful effect *on some men in the Coldstream Guards.* He was of service, also, to several inmates in Wakefield Lunatic

Asylum. The reader is referred for further information respecting this lamented man to the first number of the Zoïst.

The cases reported by the Reverend Chauncy Townshend in his philosophical work, called, "Facts in Mesmerism," are remarkable from the answer they afford to the common opinion, that the effects of Mesmerism are limited to a few nervous and fanciful persons, chiefly of the weaker sex. While he has adopted Mesmerism extensively in cases of sickness, he mentions that when he first took it up, "out of *twenty-three* individuals, in whom he induced sleepwaking, more or less perfectly, *six only were women, one only a* decided invalid." He gives the account of seven or eight young men "in perfect health,"—"in good and robust health," who were mesmerised by him. His description of his power over some sceptics at Cambridge is so curious and convincing, that it should be read by every candid inquirer. In respect to Mesmerism as a curative agent, he says himself, after much experience, "its capacity to serve either as a calmant or stimulant, according to the exigencies of the complaint, would alone give it the highest rank as a remedy. In this point of view, how valuable appear its offices, how unmatched by those of any substance in the Materia Medica." "Of all remedies, this alone pours its benefits direct upon the very springs of sensation." "In cases of deafness and blindness,

which depend on nervous weakness, we possess a subtle means of acting efficiently upon the fountain-head of the calamity." Though "*insulated cases of benefit*," he adds, "might seem suspicious, *benefits on so large a scale* must finally vanquish distrust." And he concludes his notice to the second edition of his work, "with a deep regret that prejudice should yet stand in the way of so much alleviation of human suffering as it is calculated to afford, and with a humble hope that truth and time will lead to a discreet and grateful use of this wonderful gift to man."

Colonel Sir Thomas Willshire, commanding at Chatham, has practised Mesmerism extensively, and with great success. It is no new thing to see the gallant profession of arms lending the warmest aid to the cause of humanity; and many military men, with a zeal and benevolence that reflects the highest honour upon them, have taken up our science. To Sir Thomas Willshire, in particular, occupying as he does so distinguished a position, the highest admiration is due; — and while very many interesting particulars could be related by him, one is so striking, that it cannot be too often laid before the public.

A nursery servant, who had been for a long time suffering pain, in her upper jaw, of a most excruciating kind, was compelled to undergo a *severe operation* on its account. The pain was so intense, that she could scarcely bear a touch on

the part affected. Sir T. Willshire put her into the Mesmeric trance, and the surgeon commenced the operation. It lasted more than five minutes. *She did not feel it the least.* Not a muscle or nerve either twitched or moved. When Sir Thomas awoke her, she was not conscious of having gone through the operation.

It should be added that the sympathy of taste was developed in this case. When Sir Thomas took wine, the patient said she tasted it. The same experiment was tried with biscuit, and she "tasted biscuit." And though she felt not the pain of the operation, when Captain Valiant pinched Sir Thomas's hand, she immediately felt it, and said she did not like it.

Among other cases, Sir Thomas Willshire has cured a servant, named Catharine Cocks, of a pulmonary complaint, with which she had been very ill and affected for years. She is now perfectly restored to health and strength, and is "robust and well;" "though the medical gentleman, who had attended her for some years, had, previously to the Mesmeric operation, assured her parents that she could not survive the ensuing winter."

Earl Stanhope, whose philanthropy and Christian kindness are so universally known and admired, is a practiser of the science. This excellent nobleman is not deterred by popular prejudice, or by the ridicule which some newspapers have en-

deavoured to cast upon him for his zeal in the cause, — from appearing as the advocate of truth. In a letter, of which he has permitted me to make use, the noble lord mentions several cases, in which he had been of signal service to some of his sick and poorer neighbours. In particular, he gives the case of a young man, aged twenty-seven, who had been *obliged to give up his place* on account of a nervous affection, which produced syncope, upon every trifling excitement. After being mesmerised a few times, he was *perfectly cured*. Another was the case of a young woman, aged twenty-two, the daughter of a day-labourer, who was afflicted with such violent epileptic fits, that she also was obliged to retire from service. After a treatment of a short duration, she was pronounced quite well, and returned to her situation with her former master. Other very interesting particulars could be added, if the limits of this work allowed it.

Miss Wallace, a most benevolent lady in Cheltenham, whose exertions are unremitting in everything that can be of service to the cause of humanity, can give the strongest attestation to the truth of the Mesmeric power. She has had several most extraordinary cases under her management. She has cured two cases of decline, — the only two of the kind that she has attempted. She has cured sciatica, — the *most violent cramps*, epilepsy, head-aches, tooth-aches, ear-

aches,—and some without sleep being induced. Several of her other cases are very remarkable; and I hardly know any one more able to give valuable evidence and information connected with the science, than this amiable and active-minded friend of truth.

Several other ladies and gentlemen in Cheltenham and the neighbourhood have been for some time practising the art; and could speak in the strongest way of its beneficial effect with their patients.

Captain Valiant, of Chatham, who a short time ago was a "thorough sceptic," as he called himself, is now a most powerful and successful Mesmeriser. Numerous cases could be related in which he has relieved pain, reduced swellings, and obtained a complete cure. His power seems unusually great. He writes, "I have myself mesmerised *many persons of both sexes*, and have seen *others succeed with a great many more*. I have also, in many cases, without putting the patient to sleep, removed head-aches, tooth-aches, sore-throats, and several other pains, not only in women, but *strong men*, merely by manipulating the parts affected." Space is wanting for an insertion of some interesting facts connected with a few of his patients: but the attention of the reader is invited to the following: "In my practice of Mesmerism, I have met two curious cases which perhaps may be worth mentioning.

In both of these my subjects were *powerful men*, brother captains in the army, whom I had repeatedly tried to mesmerise, but could only succeed in closing their eyes, without being able to put them to sleep, so that they could *not possibly open them*, till I de-mesmerised them. I could close their eyes in about two minutes, even by giving them a glass of magnetised water. I had also the power of catalepsing the limbs of one of them by making passes over them." Captain Valiant's testimony, like that of Mr. Townshend's, is a most valuable answer to those who think that Mesmerism applies only to patients that are "highly nervous and hysterical."

Mr. Baldock of Chatham can bear most useful testimony to the curative powers of Mesmerism. "*Several* cases," he says, "have presented themselves to him, in which relief has been given to the parties." In palpitations of the heart and severe head-aches he has been very successful. One of his cures is so remarkable, that I shall give the particulars. It is that of Robert Flood, now residing at Caistor in Lincolnshire. Mr. Flood had for several years suffered most severely from disease in one of his kidneys. He had been under the care of different medical men,—and had been placed in a London hospital. His pains were so acute, that he could not leave his bed, until the day was advanced;—and even then it was necessary for him to recline several times

before retiring for the night. He had been in this state for several years. Mr. Baldock was the happy instrument of restoring him to health, after a Mesmeric treatment of three months. This poor fellow, great part of whose time was spent in bed from pain and weakness, is "now in such robust health that he can throw a quoit." Mr. Baldock has several other most valuable instances of cure and relief: and as he keeps a journal of his Mesmeric proceedings, we may hope that these interesting particulars will be placed more fully before us.

Mr. Majendie, of Clarges House, at Ryde, in the Isle of Wight, has practised Mesmerism for the last two years with great advantage to the health of several persons. He says in a letter, "I have seen *much* of the curative effects of Mesmerism." Several of his cases are most instructive. Invalids, who had been incapable of any exertion or labour, through a deranged system, have been cured or restored to comparative health. One of the facts, that he mentions, is so corroborative of the electrical theory of Animal-Magnetism, that it deserves to be recorded. "Without the slightest suggestion or prompting, the patient said, that she *saw* the sparks of fire pass from the points of my fingers into the water which I magnetised for her." This same phenomenon has been observed by other somnambulist patients. Mr. Majendie has given great attention to the subject

of Mesmerism; and his opinion on all matters connected with it is of much value.

Besides Mr. Majendie, several other parties, ladies as well as gentlemen, have taken up the practice in the Isle of Wight; and some very curious facts, illustrative of the power, and of the curative effects of Mesmerism, might be collected in that quarter.

Mr. Topham, of the Temple, whose services in the well-known case of poor Wombell were so invaluable, and of whom, therefore, the Chirurgical Society seem to entertain a professional jealousy, has much experience in the practice. It may be useful to record one of his cases; that of a young man, aged 18, who, for four years and a half, had been subject to epileptic fits, — at least three a week, and each of two hours' duration. He suffered also from *incessant* pains in his head. Upon being mesmerised, *the pains immediately ceased altogether;* his natural sleep became sound and regular; and he had two fits only in the space of three months. The Mesmeric treatment was unavoidably discontinued in this case — before the case became perfected; but the change in the young man's health is something quite remarkable.

Mr. Thompson of Fairfield House, near York, is a very successful Mesmeriser. After much experience, he speaks in the strongest way of the utility of the science, and of the benefit that may

be derived from it. He is often able to remove acute pain without producing sleep. He says that he has tested this repeatedly "with almost invariable success; mitigating, and very often altogether removing toothache, headache, rheumatic pains, and pains occasioned by contusions, burns, and any inflammation;"—and in some few cases of a severe or acute character he has been able to afford great relief.

One of his cases is such a beautiful illustration of the power of Mesmerism, that I regret my inability, from want of space, to give the full particulars. It is that of John Bradley, a boy near York,—aged nine years, who had suffered for fifteen months from a diseased knee,—evidently of a scrofulous character. When Mr. Thompson first saw him, "the child had been suffering intense agony,—was unable to rest day or night, had a total want of appetite;—there was great inflammation extending above the knee;—the knee was enormously enlarged, and it was evident that extensive suppuration had taken place in the inside of the knee." "The child was in a high state of fever, a deep hectic flush was on his cheeks, attended with quickness of breathing and a short cough." Mr. Thompson determined to try the "experiment of making passes over the knee for half an hour. Before the time had nearly expired, the child became calm and still, then began to smile, and said he felt a *warm*

heat come out of Mr. Thompson's fingers, which had taken away the pain. He seemed a little drowsy, but no sleep was produced." After a certain period of treatment, the child's health rapidly improved,—the inflammation of the knee subsided, absorption of the matter took place, and in a month he was able to put his toe to the ground. After many other particulars, Mr. Thompson adds, "that it was in May that I commenced mesmerising him; by the latter end of August the recovery was as complete, as I thought it possible for a knee, so deformed from long-standing disease, could be." He has great use of the limb; is able to walk about very well,—suffers not the slightest pain or inconvenience,—and his health is very good. One fact is too curious to be omitted. "During the process of recovery, he *never but once went to sleep under the operation of* Mesmerism."

Here is another valuable proof of the remedial power of Mesmerism in Mr. Thompson's hands. A gentleman who had been suffering for *nine consecutive days* from severe rheumatic fever, with acute pain in the shoulders, arms, hands, loins, legs and knees; with the fever excessive; profuse night sweats caused by the agony of pain,—and loss of sleep and of appetite, placed himself under the management of Mr. Thompson. These are his own words: "In less than twenty minutes you had nearly *charmed* away all the pain and

restored warmth and feeling to my feet. You then put me to sleep: the delightful sensation of that sleep, after such extreme pain, I can scarcely describe. When you awakened me, I felt like another person. The fever was reduced: and the pain was gone. In four days I was down stairs: every time you mesmerised me, I felt as it were *new life.*

Mr. Thompson gives a description of three cures of severe and long-standing neuralgic pains of the head. One of the parties had been under the first medical advice in London; "had *a great horror of Mesmerism,* without *any faith in its curing her.*" One day, when much worse than usual, *she asked for its* application: in less than ten minutes she was relieved; and awoke up entirely free from pain; and her general health has been very good ever since.

Captain Anderson, of the Royal Marines, who is resident at Chelmsford, — is another very powerful Mesmeriser. His last case is so very striking an instance of the merciful power of Mesmerism that I shall give it somewhat in detail. Mrs. Raymond, a lady residing at Chelmsford, had suffered for nine years from a spinal complaint, — being confined to her sofa, and unable to be moved day and night; she had also lost the use of her voice. Her sufferings were dreadful. Blisters, caustic plasters, leeches, setons, medicines of all descriptions, were tried in suc-

cession, without any substantial good. These are her own words: "During the nine years I was unable to be moved from my sofa night or day; I was never free from pain; sometimes the agony was indescribable: the three last years I have been entirely speechless. I had given up all hope of recovery and almost prayed for death." "At the very time that I had resigned myself to my fate, and begged that my sufferings might soon be ended, God in his great mercy made me acquainted with Captain Anderson, who offered to try the effect of Mesmerism." "I *laughed at the idea;* but from his account of the cures he had performed, I complied, — being anxious to grasp at any thing which would do me good." Without following out the details, this is the result. "I am now able to walk out daily alone and unassisted. I am regaining my speech; — and I am free from pain, sleep soundly, and take no medicine, and am now seldom mesmerised." Well may this excellent lady, when comparing "her past sufferings with her present happiness," say that she "feels thankful to God and grateful to Captain Anderson." For here is a case, which alone would be able to substantiate the healing virtues of this blessed gift.

Dr. Engledue of Portsea practises Mesmerism in his profession, and is a warm advocate in its cause. Whoever has studied the fine intellectual forehead of Dr. Engledue, and watched his clear

eye, and calm thoughtful countenance, must acknowledge, that there stands a philosopher in the truest acceptation of the word, and one little likely to be led astray by the unreal fancies of a heated imagination.

Wr. Weekes, a surgeon at Sandwich, has "for two years devoted a large portion of his time and attention to the great remedial powers proceeding from the judicious application of Mesmerism;" — and for this independent and noble-minded conduct, he has been, of course, traduced by the ignorant and the malevolent. He has, however, the satisfaction of knowing, that the alleviation of pain and the removal of disease, under the Mesmeric treatment, and through his management, has been considerable. His professional success has been great. With him, Mesmerism has proved of use, "after the usual modes of treatment, and, in some instances, abundance of quackery to boot, had utterly failed, and rendered the case more inveterate and distressing." Among the cases that he mentions are some of "dyspepsia, habitual and obstinate constipation, paralysis, sluggish condition of the hepatic system, and hypochondriasis, muscular contractions, stubborn and otherwise hopeless cases of chronic rheumatism, local pains, and several severe forms of neuralgia, cases of general languor and debility without manifest cause, as also a case of deafness, — the removal of two teeth without the knowledge of the pa-

tient, besides several affections of an anomalous character.' Mr. Weekes is proceeding firmly and actively: his name ranks high with all parties; and he is reaping an abundant reward.

Mr. Gardiner of Portsmouth is a powerful supporter of the truth of Mesmerism. He gives a valuable account of the extraction of two teeth, attended by most painful circumstances, without the consciousness of the party. "During the whole of this trying operation not a groan or complaint escaped the patient." Other severe operations have been performed by him "without *any manifestation of feeling*" on the part of the patient.

Mr. Prideaux of Southampton is another great practical Mesmeriser. He reports three remarkable cases of the cure of St. Vitus's dance, — in which the "twitchings" diminished perceptibly from day to day, under Mesmeric treatment. From five different patients he has extracted teeth without their consciousness. His description of their demeanour under this usually painful operation is most curious. "The patient sat with the hands quietly folded in the lap,—the countenance was placid and serene, — and the whole attitude that of repose." "The insensibility was perfect" of the three other patients. The fifth "allowed me to operate for two hours with *the most passive indifference.*" Mr. Prideaux, himself a medical man, says of one of his patients, "a case more

conclusive of the power of Mesmerism as a remedial agent in the cure of disease, it would be difficult to conceive." "If imagination," says he again, "can work such wonders, she should be placed at the head of the Materia Medica." With many such enlightened practitioners as Mr. Prideaux, the well-attested facts of Mesmerism will soon force their way on the mind of the public.

Mr. Janson of Pennsylvania Park, near Exeter, the President of the Exeter Literary and Philosophical Society, and a gentleman well known in that part of the world among scientific men, is also a Mesmeriser, and can bear his valuable testimony to the therapeutic virtues of the science.

Mr. Kiste, a most intelligent gentleman from Germany, and who has been resident some little time in Plymouth, has devoted much of his attention to the science. Among the cases in which he has found it efficacious, one alone can be particularly mentioned, which by itself would confirm the unspeakable value of Mesmerism. It was a severe case of spasmodic asthma. The patient had been subject to it for *twelve years*. She says herself, that such were her sufferings, that for "many days she was obliged to sit with a pillow on her lap to support her stomach." "The paroxysms were so violent that she was obliged to sit on the floor for four-and-twenty hours at a time." "To describe half my sufferings when the spasmodic breathing came on, is impossible."

She had been attended by eight or nine medical men in succession. Cupping, blistering, hot baths, were tried, but without any important effect. In short, her own description of the periodical pains which returned every fortnight,—of their severity, and of other attendant evils, is painful to read. A clergyman, well acquainted with her family, now writes to the Mesmeriser, and says, "It is now at this moment (Jan. 29.) nine weeks since she was subjected to the Mesmeric influence, and she has *been entirely free from asthma*, her general health is improved, and she is gaining flesh." I shall not enter into the further details of this very striking and interesting case; as we have reason to hope that Mr. Kiste will himself shortly bring them before the public.

Mr. Holm of Highgate,—who, in a most philanthropic manner, devotes much of his time to the benefit of his fellow-creatures, has found Mesmerism a most efficacious remedy. He has obtained some very remarkable cures. He generally has a large number of Mesmeric patients under his management. He tells me, that he has proved Mesmerism to be most valuable in epilepsy, rheumatism, brain fever, diarrhœa, headaches, and many neuralgic disorders. Mr. Holm has large experience in phrenology, and has tested with great success its connection with vital magnetism.

Mr. Charles Childs of Bungay "was *very much indisposed* to receive the phenomena of Mesmerism

as facts,"—"but he was constrained to admit their reality, unless he would deny the evidence of his own senses." He says, "I have practised Mesmerism above four years; in this period, I *have proved its unquestionably beneficial results on several of the most afflictive maladies.*" In corroboration of the above, I can state, that I called on the mother of one of Mr. Childs's patients, and heard from her own mouth the details of a very remarkable cure of a child that had been frightened in a fearful manner. Every other remedy, but Mesmerism, seemed to fail in this case. Mr. Childs generally has about four patients at a time under his hands. Much attention has been awakened in his neighbourhood by the following operations. I quote from the very able letter which Mr. Webb, the operating surgeon, addressed to the editor of "The Medical Times." Mr. Webb says, that he does "not come forward to support the theory of any man. He desires only, as an unprejudiced observer, to record facts which he had himself tested." The cases are these: "Two young women, Mesmeric patients of Mr. Childs, who had suffered from toothache for some time past, consented to have their teeth extracted while in Mesmeric somnolency, but were not apprised of the time at which this was to be done. That they might have no reason to suspect what was about to take place, I was not sent for until Mr. Childs had put them into the Mesmeric condition,

when I went and extracted for one a very troublesome stump, and for the other, a double tooth in the upper jaw. I am morally certain that no means were employed to produce this state of unconsciousness except the Mesmeric." * * * * "After a short time they were awakened, and were both wholly unconscious of all that had taken place." "Nor was this all; for neither at the time when they were awakened, nor on the following day, did they experience either pain in the jaw or tenderness in the gum." Evidence, like this, coming from the surgeon himself, has a twofold strength.

A similar operation took place at Hinckley in Leicestershire, last June, upon a young man, named Paul. The tooth was extracted during the Mesmeric sleep, without consciousness. Paul told a correspondent of mine, that "he did not feel any pain whatever."

Mr. Nicholles of Bruton Street has extracted two or three teeth from patients in the Mesmeric sleep, *without their knowledge.* In his last case, he says, "The pulse was 108 under the Mesmeric influence, and rose a little during the operation. On being awakened, she expressed the most lively gratitude and delight at having lost her troublesome companion."

Another striking case of this kind was the extraction of a tooth from W. Gill, at Edinburgh, without pain, on May 1. 1843, by Mr.

Nasmyth, Surgeon-Dentist to the Queen. Several medical gentlemen were present. Mr. Craig was the Mesmeriser. Gill had no feeling, when the tooth was being extracted,—but after he was awakened, he felt a soreness and pain in the gums.

Mr. Carstairs of Sheffield, who practises Mesmerism, has extracted teeth from parties who were not aware of the operation. He has also performed several minor operations, such as opening an abscess and dressing the wound; cutting a large wart from a patient's hand;—inserting a seton, without the parties feeling the slightest pain or suffering any inconvenience.—Other medical men in Sheffield have employed Mesmerism as a medical auxiliary, and could bear testimony to its usefulness.

Mr. Chandler, a surgeon of Rotherhithe, has much experience of the beneficial effects of Mesmerism. Among other cases, he has had one of insanity, in which his Mesmeric power was invaluable. He "produced a cure, rapid and perfect, when bleeding and powerful medicines, and medicines given powerfully and perseveringly, had all been unavailing."

Mr. Purland of Mortimer Street, Cavendish Square, offers an honourable instance of the triumph of truth over prejudice and preconceived opinions. I met Mr. Purland last July at the house of a friend: his opinions against the ex-

istence of Mesmerism as a fact were most decisive; I had much conversation with him, — but did not shake him in the least. He consented, however, to witness some Mesmeric experiments; — and after giving them a due and patient investigation, he became a convert, and is now a valuable ally, — and has practised the art with great success. He has cured his father in a dreadful and most distressing malady, in a case where no relief was procured from medicine. He has cured cases of asthma, hysteria, lameness, and deafness. At various times he has relieved patients of headache, toothache, pains in the chest, &c. He calls Mesmerism, in a letter I lately received from him, "a science of much importance;" and this from a gentleman, who a few months back was a determined sceptic! Such, however, is the force of truth, where straightforward and honourable intentions go hand in hand with the inquiry.

Mr. Boyton, a surgeon of Watlington, in Oxfordshire, is another honourable example of a manly independence of mind. His acknowledged reputation in his profession gives value to what he states. He has cured a severe case of fits; and another serious case of injury, accompanied by much pain, and general ill health. He says, "I do not mean to recommend the indiscriminate use of this agent in every case, nor substitute it for acknowledged remedies. But in some cases I

should not hesitate to employ it; it *strengthens the nervous system, improves the digestion, and tranquillizes the mind.*" This is most important testimony.

Dr. Wilson of the Middlesex Hospital is so well known by his publications on the subject to be a firm supporter of the truths of Mesmerism, that it is only needful to allude to his name. Some readers may, however, be interested in learning, that Dr. Wilson has cured a case of insanity, or intense melancholy, by the aid of Mesmerism.

Mr. Mulholland of Walsall is a most earnest and successful Mesmerist. He has reduced a wen of eleven years' standing, and of the size of a goose's egg, so completely, that it requires acute observation to detect it.

Mr. Stenson of Northampton is another valuable supporter of the cause. He has cured cases of fits, — melancholia, &c. &c. He says that he looks forward with well-grounded hope to Mesmerism being more generally applied as a curative means.

Mr. Summers of Chatham has acted successfully upon a case of obstinate hernia by Mesmerism.

Dr. Cryer of Bradford states a case where a young girl, named Louisa Taylor, who had lost the use of her arm and leg by paralysis, was ma-

terially benefited by the Mesmeric treatment of Mr. Prest of that town.

Mr. Brindley of Stourbridge has cured various diseases by this power: an affection of the heart, of seven years' standing; a case of general debility of the nervous system; and several cases of fits and rheumatic pains, &c. &c.

Mr. Tubbs of Upwell Isle, in Cambridgeshire, has proved the reality and efficacy of Mesmerism in the treatment of many diseases. Delirium from grief, muscular pain, chronic rheumatism, and several other cases could be named, where he found the Mesmeric treatment most successful. This earnest friend to the cause of humanity has found Mesmerism most efficacious in several operations,—in the extraction of teeth, &c.:—Mr. Tubbs has, at this moment, some most interesting patients under his care.

Mr. Donovan, the able phrenologist of King William Street, Strand, can give very valuable testimony as to the powers and virtues of our science.

In Wolverhampton Mesmerism is making vast strides in popular estimation. Dr. Owens of Stourbridge, a medical gentleman, lately made many converts, by the following operation: "A young woman, suffering dreadfully from toothache, was thrown into the Mesmeric sleep, for the purpose of having the tooth extracted. A sceptical dentist happened to be present and undertook the ope-

ration. There was much difficulty in the case. The key slipped from the tooth twice; and a splinter, nearly an inch and a half in length, was broken from the alveolar portion of the jaw. Still there was not the slightest manifestation of pain; and the patient, on being brought to herself, had not the slightest idea that the operation had been performed. The dentist said, that "there was no more movement than there *would have been in a corpse.*" About eighty persons were present.

Mr. Gibbon Wakefield, who is so well known in the political world, and was such a staunch unbeliever in the science, is now "satisfied of its truth, and has since mesmerised many hundred persons."

The names of numerous other Mesmerisers might be mentioned, — who could all bear testimony to the curative power of the art. Among them are Mr. Vernon, who was so disgracefully treated by the medical gentlemen of Greenwich; — Mr. Bailey, — Mr. Spencer Hall, — Mr. Hart of Rochester, — Dr. Collyer, Mr. Dove, and many others.

In Scotland Mesmerism has taken a firm root. Its remedial power has been tested over and over again. And Mr. Lang's useful little work on "Mesmerism, with a Report of Cases developed in Scotland," should be read by every person solicitous of the truth.

Dr. Elliotson's eminent success in the practice

is too well known to require notice. All, who really seek for valuable information on this head, should consult his Papers in the Zoïst. They will there see the cases reported in detail, — and enriched by medical observations of the highest value. Let it be sufficient to state that he has cured cases of insanity, — cases of St. Vitus's dance, of palsy, of loss of voice, — of deafness and dumbness, of epilectic and other fits; — cases where every other medical treatment had utterly failed. The increasing circulation of the Zoïst has placed these wonderful facts so completely within the reach of the medical student, that this brief allusion to them is no otherwise necessary than to make our list of leading Mesmerisers complete.

Here, then, is a train of witnesses in favour of our science! Here is a succession of evidence from men of ability, — of education, of honourable standing in society, from whose report alone, the existence of Mesmerism as a fact in nature might be confidently predicated! And this list might have been swelled to any extent! What an amount, moreover, have we here of happiness conferred! What a mass of misery, of pain, of sickness, of sorrow lightened or removed! Here at length are a few pleasing pages in the long sad chapter of human life! Here, at last, is a delightful study for the philanthropist and the Christian! And all these blessings communicated by means of a power that is derided, or dreaded,

or disbelieved! We have confined our testimony to what has occurred in this country alone and within the last few years, — but what a pile of narratives could have been added to it, if the limits of a humble work like this would have allowed it. It might have been added, that on the Continent Mesmerism has been received as a fact (*un fait accompli*) for years: that in Germany it is studied and practised to a considerable extent; that in Prussia many physicians make use of it under the authority of government; and that in Berlin in particular the greatest success has attended its use; — that in Stockholm degrees are granted in the university by an examination on its laws; that in Russia, the Emperor appointed a commission of medical men to inquire into it, and that this commission pronounced it "a very important agent," — that the first physician of the emperor, and many others at Petersburgh, speak in favour of its utility; and that at Moscow a systematic course of treatment under the highest auspices has been employed for years. In Denmark, physicians practise it under a royal ordinance and by a decree of the College of Health. In Holland, some of the first men take it up. In France, the extent to which it is practised is considerable indeed. I have it from good authority that in Paris every fourth medical man is a Mesmerist. A commission of the Royal Academy of Medicine there recommended that Mesmerism

should be allowed a place within the circle of the medical sciences (comme moyen thérapeutique devrait trouver sa place dans le cadre des connaissances médicales). Some of the first physicians in Paris affixed their signatures to this report. I might mention the cases related by Foissac in his Report*: I might give extracts without number on the subject from different French and German works. I might quote from De Leuze, Puysegur, Wienholt, Treviranus, Brandis of Copenhagen, &c. *usque ad nauseam.* The great name of Hufeland of Berlin is a host in itself.

I have a curious little French work by me, called "La Vérité du Magnétisme prouvée par les Faits," in which the list of cures effected by a lady in Paris is quite marvellous. In the United tates the same mighty progress has been made. Mr. Buckingham, the distinguished traveller, told me, that it is there practised to a very great extent. In his amusing work on that country he mentions several curious Mesmeric cases and phenomena that he witnessed in Philadelphia, at the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, tried upon children in the presence of several physicians and legal gentlemen, when it appeared proved beyond suspicion, to the satisfaction of all present, that "there was a complete suspension of the susceptibility of pain during the state" of Mesmerism.

* Rapports sur le Magnétisme Animal, par M. P. Foissac, Docteur en Médecine.

Dr. Mitchell, an eminent physician of Philadelphia, mentioned an operation performed by him in the extraction of a tooth under most painful circumstances, when no feeling was experienced, —and no recollection of the fact existed afterwards.* And who and what are the men that have thus advocated Mesmerism? I shall answer in the words of the celebrated French physiologist, Dr. Georget, —who says, —"It is a very astonishing thing that animal magnetism is not even known by name among the ignorant classes: *it is among the enlightened ranks that it finds support.* It is men who have received some education who have taken its cause in hand: it is partly *learned men, naturalists, physicians, philosophers,* who have composed the numerous volumes in its favour." † And what is the reply of our opponents to this pyramid of facts? That they are all cases of delusion? Granted, for the sake of argument, that very many might be so, — that in several instances the ablest men might be deceived: what then? still even with the largest deduction under this head, what an accumulation of evidence would yet remain! As Mr. Colquhoun observes, "Upon what evidence are we permitted to believe any series of facts? What amount of proof is required?" The host of competent and highly qualified men, who have nar-

* Buckingham's "America," vol. ii. p. 119—125.
† Apud "Isis Revelata," vol. ii. p. 45.

rated their experience, forbid the supposition of a universal delusion. Some other theory must be adopted. Mesmerism is a science of facts. To facts we appeal: and we do not believe, as has been well observed, that "any science rests upon experiments more numerous, more positive, or more easily ascertained." *

To facts, then, it is repeated, do we appeal. What the nature of those facts is, it is superfluous to mention. I presume that most of my readers have a general notion respecting them; that they are aware, how that after certain manipulations a deep sleep comes on; — how that this is followed by the phenomena of attraction, of sympathy, of insensibility, of phreno-magnetism, and other singular manifestations, all varying with various sleepers; and how, that when the patient is awakened, a sanative or soothing effect is generally experienced. To the higher order of phenomena, such as *clairvoyance*, internal vision, and so forth, I have made little allusion. Not that I disbelieve,

* "Il a été établi en France, et dans presque tous les pays du nord, des traitemens magnétiques, où des *milliers de malades* ont trouvé la santé. La relation détaillée d'un grand nombre de guérisons a été publiée, soit par les particuliers, soit par les sociétés de l'harmonie." — Foissac, *Rapports*, p. 500.

This was said by Foissac, a medical man himself, more than *ten* years ago, — in 1833, before the practice of Mesmerism was much known in England. If Foissac could say in 1833 that there were *thousands* of sick persons who had received benefit from the art, what might he not state now? This, let it be remembered, is the main question; that the *number of successful cases* proves the power.

or have not witnessed something of them. But this work aims strictly at a practical character. I have no wish to astonish or amuse. Those wondrous facts of *clairvoyance*, which cause the faith of so many to hesitate, have no necessary bearing on the therapeutic qualities of Mesmerism. They might all be false, and yet the healing virtues of the magnetic slumber remain unquestioned. At the same time, it may not be useless to mention, that there is not one single phenomenon of the higher order of Mesmerism, which has not been found to exist in a natural state and spontaneously, in some recorded cases of extremely-diseased individuals. The annals of natural somnambulism are full of them. Mesmerism simply brings out in the process of cure and by artificial means, what nature throws forth in the action of disease. Take the staggering fact of reading with the eyes closed, through, what I believe, an electric communication. This has occurred in a natural state. The report is to be found in the 38th volume of the French Encyclopædia, on the authority of the then Archbishop of Bordeaux. It was the case of a young ecclesiastic, who walked in his sleep, — took pen, ink, and paper, and composed and wrote his sermons, and read, with his eyes closed. To test him, the archbishop held a piece of pasteboard before his face to prevent his seeing, — but he appeared to see equally well. Now we repeat, that this case had no connection with Mes-

merism,—that it is quite independent of it,—that it occurred spontaneously and in a natural state, and is established on as high authority as any single fact in science. It was simply the effect of a morbid action on the nervous system of the young man.—And so of all the other strange phenomena of Mesmerism; there is not one of them but has its parallel in some instance of common somnambulism: and I know no study that would so well prepare the mind of the student for a due apprehension of this question, as a perusal of the marvellous facts that have been recorded in the histories of many natural sleepwalkers.—However, a further allusion to these singular manifestations is foreign to our purpose. My object is wholly utilitarian. And my endeavour has been to prove by a copious body of statistics, that there is a state into which the human frame can be placed, from whence the most powerfully remedial results may be obtained, even in cases of extremest suffering.

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST TRUTH OF MESMERISM. — MONOTONY. — HYSTERIA. — IMITATION. — FAITH. — IMAGINATION. — "MESMERISE ME, AND I WILL BELIEVE YOU." — FIRST FRENCH REPORT. — SECOND FRENCH REPORT OF MEDICAL MEN ALONE. — MR. WAKLEY. — LONDON UNIVERSITY. — BRITISH ASSOCIATION AND MR. BRAID. — ROYAL MEDICAL AND CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY. — GREAT NAMES AMONG BELIEVERS IN MESMERISM.

And what is the reply of certain medical men, who presume *ex cathedrâ* to give an opinion on the subject without condescending to look into it,—what, we demand, is their reply to the representation of this state? Simply, that it is impossible; the thing, they say, is in itself impossible; — and consequently that no farther investigation is requisite for the student. To say that facts are extraordinary,—are difficult to conceive,—are contrary to previous experience, is but the duty of a philosopher, who should suspend his belief, till every reasonable doubt be done away. But to begin with asserting, that a thing is *impossible*,—and that it is contrary to the laws of nature, because it differs from our early opinions, is irrational in the extreme, and eminently absurd in days like our own, when every year we see things accomplished, which in our youth were

deemed impracticable. The real question is,—*what are the laws of nature?* Are they all known and established? But inasmuch as to set limits in this way to the operations of nature, and call a thing which is occurring every hour "impossible," is not quite satisfactory to the philosophic inquirer, a few ingenious theories are propounded by the faculty to silence the unreasonable questionings of the "impertinently curious."

One gentleman will tell you, that "Monotony" is the secret. The constant movement of the hands before the face *,—a continued friction by passes down the arm, has, they say, such a dull deadening effect, that the mere monotony of the action induces somnolency. All this is granted: many a restless invalid has been lulled into slumber by some such a soothing process. The tickling of a feather, or the reading of a dull book in a drowsy tone for a prolonged period, will often persuade to sleep. But this explanation will not meet the difficulty. It applies but to a few isolated instances. And first we ask, how many times would this experiment answer in the case of a feverish patient? For days? for weeks? for months? A daily repetition of the trial would, I fear, soon break the charm. Not so with Mes-

* "To the *waving motion of the hands*, in what are termed the 'passes,' I attribute all the phenomena which animal magnetism is said to induce in patients who submit to this mummery"—*Unity of Disease*, by Dr. Dickson, p. 91.

merism. The mesmeric sleep is obtained only the more easily and more quickly at each renewal of the process. But with some patients, these monotonous movements, made by parties unskilled in Mesmerism, not only do not soothe, but have even an irritating effect; — to whom, however, the Mesmeric action, applied in a judicious way, succeeds at once. I can speak to this point from my own experience. But this is not all. Many Mesmerisers scarcely use monotonous movements at all. The mutual contact of the thumbs, the application of the points of the fingers near the eyes, the pressure of the hand upon the crown of the head, are the plans that I have seen most usually adopted, and which I have found most successful myself. Often and often have I seen patients in a state of cerebral excitement put to sleep in two, in three, in four minutes, by the contact of the balls of the thumbs. A lady has told me that oftimes from the moment her thumb touched the thumb of the Mesmeriser, a leaden weight has settled on her eyelids, making resistance to sleep impossible, — and this in a case where every other soporific method had been worse than idle. No: monotony will not explain the difficulty. In fact, so little has monotony to do with the effect, that none but those who have seen little or nothing of Mesmeric action could invent this theory for its solution.

Driven from this post, our opponents next

establish themselves behind the entrenchments of "*hysteria.*" This is the explanation, that is for ever being advanced in anti-mesmeric works and lectures at the hospitals; and I think it more especially worthy of answer, as I have heard it made by some able and enlightened friends. The patient, they say, is "highly nervous and excitable; it is simply an hysteric action, — nothing else." Now there is much plausibility in this representation. Its vagueness catches the ear. The undefined character of the word "nervousness" includes almost every thing in common parlance. Merely say, that a patient is nervous, and all difficulties are removed. But we must pin our philosophic friends down to something more specific. These loose generalities carry no meaning in them. And first we would observe, that it is not nervous patients, who are always the most susceptible to Mesmeric action. The idea is convenient; but the fact is often the reverse. Stout strong-minded men have been mesmerised; and I have seen patients who were termed "highly nervous" resist the influence altogether. But let us analyse this explanation more closely. *What is hysteria?* Is it hysteria, when a pin is forced into a delicate female's hand, far enough to draw blood, and she feels no pain, and exhibits no change of expression? Is it hysteria, when a brute strikes a sleeping boy a violent blow with a walking-stick, and no move-

ment or consciousness results from it? Is it hysteria, where excitement and strong cerebral irritation are soothed and calmed down into tranquillity and repose? Is it hysteria, when intolerable heat and throbbing in the head are carried off and leave not a vestige? Is it hysteria, when racking torturing pain is relieved or completely taken away? And all these effects not happening once and accidentally, but over and over, and over again? According to common experience, these effects would rather result from hysteric action than be removed by it; and certainly it is a novel doctrine, when we are taught, that an abatement in feverish or cerebral irritability is the product of hysteria. However, — it is now said, that all these states are the effect of hysteria. Hysteria includes every thing. Whatever may be the condition of the human body, — be it unusual repose or unusual excitement, — be it exquisite sensibility to pain, or an utter unconsciousness of its presence, hysteria is the cause. Be it so. And how much nearer are we now towards resolving the difficulty? For again I ask, *what is hysteria?* Do the medical men know themselves? Can they explain it? Can they say what are its causes, proximate or remote? Are they not confessedly in the dark on the subject? To explain Mesmerism, therefore, by hysteria, is but to exchange one difficulty for another. It is but a shifting of position, not

an approximation towards the truth. It is a moving of the feet, not a marching forwards. With far greater judgment did one of the most superior and rising members of the profession observe to me, that "Mesmerism, if true, rather threw a light on hysteria, than hysteria on Mesmerism." It would rather lead them, he said, to a solution of their very difficulties on that question. But be this as it may, to explain one difficulty by another is a most unphilosophical proceeding, — and one through which no approach whatever is made to an illustration of the truth. But on the other hand, if Mesmeric action be nothing but hysteria, — as perhaps it is, — then we assert, that hysteria, when produced artificially and intentionally, ceases to be a disease, — but becomes a condition full of medicinal and healing virtue, — as the inexhaustible catalogue of cures accomplished by its power incontrovertibly proves.

"IMITATION" is a favourite explanation with others; — and certainly imitation is a key which interprets many facts in the science. Imitation is one of the most powerful agents for working on the human mind; — much that is good or wicked in human conduct is the result of imitation alone; — and it may be a curious study for the physiologist to trace the secret springs of imitation to their native source. But though imitation may explain many parts in the conduct of a Mesmeric patient,

— it goes but a small way. How can we explain this fact, that young and artless girls, — the deaf, the dumb, — the blind, — patients who had never heard of Mesmerism, — who knew not what process was going to take place, have all equally exhibited the same class of phenomena? Imitation is often used too for a synonym of *Imposture*. But when employed in this sense, it assumes that the capabilities of the human mind are great indeed, and that the histrionic talent is far more common than is suspected. The lovers of the drama complain that the days of tragic and comic excellence are departed, and that not an actor remains to tread the stage. Unfounded regret! If the charges of our opponents be correct, and imitation (or imposture) be the clue to Mesmerism, then indeed actors and actresses of the highest talent abound in every district, — artists, before whom the genius of a Garrick would grow pale, are making the circuit of the country in every direction, — and the art of Roscius is now at its zenith. I have seen ignorant, uneducated, simple persons transformed by the touch of the Mesmeriser into the most finished performers. Yes, — if imitation (or imposture) be the solution, then is a greater wonder established than the supposed discoveries of Mesmer, — and the histrionic powers of the human mind proved to be something beyond the range of old experience. Either way, "the laws of nature" must be remodelled; — old

systems are not sufficient; for mentally or physically, a new and wondrous power has been detected, — which henceforward must find a place amidst the schemes and divisions of the philosopher and metaphysician.

Faith or confidence in the power, and a *desire to be healed* by the process of Mesmerism are again suggested by others as a cause to which we may ascribe some of the cures of which we have spoken. On this theory, how are we to explain those instances, where the patient had a positive aversion to the practice; where, so far from the existence of faith, disgust and disbelief were the strong predominant feelings; — and where the remedy was adopted almost by compulsion, and yet the cure and the benefits have been most marked and unequivocal? Here I can again come forward with my testimony.

Again, therefore, is a fresh interpretation needed, and all is resolved by another party into the large, the comprehensive phrase of "Imagination." Truly has it been observed, that this reference of all these difficulties to the influence of imagination is but "a cloak to cover ignorance." That imagination has a most powerful effect on the habit of the body, we all know. Numerous striking events can be clearly traced to it. Several wonderful cures have been produced by it. It is a valuable, a useful auxiliary. None but an idiot would deny its power. Still, imagination, with all its vehement

effects, has a limit. There is a time when its influence wears off. An invalid often "imagines" that a new medical adviser has been of service,—that a change of medicine has done good,—that a different treatment has been beneficial; and repeatedly has a healthier action been brought about by this power of the mind upon the nervous system. But much too generally the spell is dissolved at an early day. Before the tedious week shall have run its round, a relapse has occurred, and the benefit is forgotten. Not so, again we say, with Mesmerism. The longer it is tried, the more powerful is the hold. A patient may be sent to sleep by imagination two or three days in succession; but would the same method succeed day after day for several months? Here is a point on which I can speak with confidence. The process, which was comparatively feeble in its effect upon a patient in my family during the first week is now, at nearly the expiration of a year, more efficacious than ever. Look again to its influence on pain. We hear at times of pain disappearing suddenly through some operation of the mind. An individual, suffering from a raging toothache, has been known to walk to a dentist's door, when the simple ringing of the bell has so wrought on his system as to stop the pain and change the condition of his body. But who believes that this power of the mind would be continuous? Who supposes that the daily experiment of a walk to the opera-

tor's house would suspend the agony, if the pain recurred every morning? The unlucky tooth would in the end require extraction. Not so with Mesmerism. Pain is removed only the more speedily by a repetition of the manipulations. The oftener they are tried, the quicker are their effects. This notion of "imagination" will not therefore get rid of the difficulty. It is a convenient mode of explanation, and a courteous; when, in reality, the insolent charge of fraud is really meant, and is the only alternative. Either certain facts are true, or they are false; for the mind has nothing to do with them. Is it imagination, when the hand of the sleeper follows the hand of the mesmeriser? Is it imagination, when the touch of any one but the mesmeriser throws the sleeper into extreme and convulsive agitation? Is it imagination, when the sleeper hears no other voice but that of the mesmeriser? Is it imagination, when what the mesmeriser tastes is recognised by the sleeper, be it bitter or sweet, or water or wine? These questions might be multiplied indefinitely; but here are sufficient: and what is the answer? We reply, that there is a physical impossibility that the mind, according to what we understand by that term, should have any thing to do with such effects. The *sleeper is fast asleep, and knows nothing of them.* Either they are the result of some newly discovered power on the nervous system, or

patients, as honourable and virtuous as the opponents themselves, are assuming an appearance for which they have no earthly inducement. "Imagination," in the usual acceptation of the word, can afford no explanation to these phenomena in any way whatever.

A few other facts may be stated on this point. Children are often easily magnetised. Foissac mentions the case of a child, aged twenty-eight months, that he placed in somnambulism. Deaf and dumb persons, and some that were blind, have been thrown into this sleep, without being aware at the time of what was intended or what was going on. Animals have been powerfully affected. Dr. Wilson's experiments on the brute creation are most conclusive. Several sceptics, and those men of powerful intellect, have been mesmerised. Mr. Townshend, in his "Facts," gives some remarkable instances of what took place at Cambridge with some unbelieving adversaries. Professor Agassiz, of Neufchâtel, in Switzerland, was put to sleep by Mr. Townshend, according to his own statement, after he had done every thing in his power to resist the influence. But there is one point more decisive than any which we have just mentioned,—and which, as Colquhoun states, is well known to all practical mesmerisers,—viz. "that if we attempt to manipulate in contrary directions, the usual effects will not be produced,

whilst others of a totally different nature will be manifested." In short, of all the explanations that have been offered, the least tenable is that of "imagination." Still, what is in a name? If the phrase be more acceptable than that of Mesmerism, let it be adopted. All we ask and want is, that the system itself be not neglected. "If imagination," says Mr. Chenevix, "can cure diseases, then cure by imagination, and the sick will bless you." We have no wish to supersede the labours of the faculty in their important department: what is rather desired is, that the treatment of the mesmeric process should be under their direction and control,—as is the case in many countries on the Continent. In Russia, in Denmark, in Prussia, none but medical men or those under their superintendence are permitted to exercise the art. Let, then, the profession take the practice up, and we will sacrifice the name. Let "Imagination" be placed on the pharmacopœia; let "Imagination" be written on their prescriptions; let the students at the hospitals be instructed how to exert the ideal faculty: only, as Dugald Stewart so sensibly observes, let them not "scruple to copy whatever processes are necessary for subjecting diseases to their command." Let them not culpably refuse to increase the resources of their art; and I, for one, would gladly consent that the management of this mighty agent should

be left mainly in their hands, and that the name of Mesmerism should be discarded and forgotten!*

But our concessions and explanations fall unheeded on the ear. The grand *coup de théâtre* yet remains; "Mesmerise me, and I will believe you." Often have I heard the most conclusive answers presented to these objectors; every misconception has been disposed of by argument, by facts, by analogy, when the unbeliever suddenly escapes from the controversy by a demand that the experiment be tried upon himself. And if, as is almost certain, the experiment fail, the question he considers as finally settled. I was attending a mesmeric lecture one day, when a gentleman present sat down on the chair, and requested the lecturer to try his skill upon him. — The usual manipulations went on for a certain period; much interest was felt by the spectators; when after a given time our unsusceptible gentleman rose up,— looked round the room with a triumphant smirk of self-satisfaction, declaring that he "felt nothing," and then left the company with the air of a philo-

* Let us note what M. Bertrand, a physician himself, says: — "Il est de toute évidence que si les savans et les médecins veulent guider et faire tourner au profit de l'humanité et des sciences la nouvelle découverte qu'on leur annonce, il faut qu'ils commencent par s'en emparer. A quel titre voudront-ils la juger, s'ils sont convaincus de ne pas la connaître? Et n'est-ce pas une chose honteuse pour ceux qui s'occupent de l'art de guérir, de voir *les magnétiseurs les plus ignorans se montrer plus instruits* qu'eux sur un grand nombre de phénomènes qui appartient à la connaissance de l'homme malade?" — Bertrand, *Traité du Somnambulisme*, p. 431.

sopher who had refuted the claims of Mesmerism once and for ever! and this is called experiment! as if certain *conditions* were not indispensable. What *all* those conditions are, we are not prepared to show; but common sense might surely teach us, that *some* conditions were at least required. In chemical experiments on impassive material substances certain conditions are demanded; how much more so, on the delicate human frame, where the mind can in addition offer a resistance, and the party himself strain his utmost to reject the sleep? Those who have been present at lectures on Galvanism or Chemistry must have observed how slight a cause will disturb the simplest experiment. A change of atmosphere will affect the machinery and spoil the electric action in a moment. If a conductor be *overcharged*, a result different from the one expected will be evolved. If a body be *saturated* with any ingredient that it holds in solution, the effect will not be the same, as when the substances are united in more congenial proportions. In some experiments, the *presence* of a small quantity of water appears always necessary to develop certain acid properties. And thus we might go on *ad infinitum*. And why are not similar laws equally applicable in the practice of Mesmerism? And why is it that the parties, who, more than any others, know the necessity of such conditions in regard to natural philosophy, are the very men who dispense

with their presence in the analogous experiments on the human frame. My own opinion on the subject, after much observation, is, that sick and delicate persons are more susceptible of the magnetic influence than those in robust health. Not but what cases can be produced, where the healthiest individuals have been readily mesmerised, and the delicate invalid remained unaffected: but these are the exceptions rather than the rule. Where there is any unequal action, — any irregularity in the system, any improper or feeble circulation, — any extreme or overwrought activity of the cerebral or nervous temperament, there the Mesmeric influence seems to produce an effect. Its tendency appears to be to *restore the equilibrium of a disturbed or irregular distribution* of the nervous power. Such an irregularity may exist, unknown and unsuspected, in the system of a robust man, and explain his readier susceptibility to the equalising power; while a more delicate patient, from the absence of some other condition, which is equally necessary, may resist the influence altogether, although the general state of his organisation and temperament might, but for this one and unknown circumstance, have rendered him peculiarly alive to the magnetic force. However, all this is but conjecture, — and touches not the truthfulness of the facts recorded. — It ought, moreover, to be added, that sleep is not the only or a necessary symptom. Great effects may result,

— and no sleep take place. *Sleep is only one out of many symptoms*, though of course the most general and intelligible. Among the other conditions, a physical sympathy between the parties seems the first requisite; what that sympathy may be, is a difficult question; but it is a known fact, that a patient yields to the influence of one mesmeriser rather than another.* A superior state of health, or of muscular energy, or of mental power, on the part of the Mesmeriser over the patient, seems another condition; — and yet this is by no means invariable or without exceptions.

* The best practical writer on this subject is Deleuze: his experience has been great. I refer my readers to what he says on this point — as to a safe authority: — "Tous les hommes ne sont pas sensibles à l'action magnétique, et les mêmes le sont plus ou moins, selon les dispositions momentanées dans lesquelles il se trouvent. Ordinairement le magnétisme n'exerce aucune action sur les personnes qui jouissent d'une santé parfaite. Le même homme qui était insensible au magnétisme dans l'état de santé, en éprouvera des effets lorsqu'il sera malade. Il est telle maladie dans laquelle l'action du magnétisme ne se fait point apercevoir; telle autre sur laquelle cette action est évidente. *On n'en sait pas encore assez pour déterminer la cause de ces anomalies*, ni pour prononcer à l'avance si le magnétisme agira ou n'agira pas; on a seulement quelques probabilités à cet égard; mais cela ne saurait motiver une objection contre la réalité du magnétisme, attendu que les trois quarts des malades au moins en resentent les effets.

"La nature a établi un rapport ou une sympathie physique entre quelques individus; c'est par cette raison que plusieurs magnétiseurs agissent beaucoup plus promptement et plus efficacement sur certains malades que sur d'autres, et que le même magnétiseur ne convient pas également à tous les malades. Il y a même des magnétiseurs qui sont plus propres à guérir certaines maladies. Plusieurs personnes se croient insensibles à l'action du magnétisme, parce qu'elles n'ont pas rencontré le magnétiseur qui leur convient." — Deleuze, *Instruction Pratique*, cap. i. sect. 21, 22.

Again, it should be borne in mind, that an apparent external effect is not always to be expected at the first sitting. Sleep may not be produced for a week, for a month, — for three months; but it may come at last, and a cure be effected. In the case of individuals in good health it is especially less probable that somnolency should come on at the first trial; and in fact, few things are more ridiculous or misplaced than the exhibition of a vigorous muscular man offering himself to the manipulations of the Mesmeriser. Would the loss of the same quantity of blood, — or the administration of the same amount of medicine,—have the same or equal effect on two opposite constitutions or habits of body? The abstraction of ten ounces of blood might hardly be felt by a strong athletic yeoman, while the depletion would be far too reducing for his feeble attenuated daughter. One man has been known to swallow with impunity more than twenty of Morison's drastic pills; while two of the same precious preparation have induced a distressing and painful result upon his apparently healthier and more enduring brother. And why is there this difference? simply, — because men's constitutions are different. And is Mesmerism to be an exception to this general rule? Be the party mesmerised delicate or robust, — the same Mesmeriser only throws off a certain amount of Mesmeric influence (whether through the medium of some electric fluid we

know not), — and why therefore should the same effect be expected in these opposite conditions within the same period of time? however, upon this point we are as yet in the dark. The above observations are rather meant as hints and suggestions for others. And though the question is not one quarter exhausted, enough has been said to show the unreasonableness and absurdity of those who demand an immediate effect on themselves as a test of this power. What I always reply to medical men, who request to be placed under the process, — is, — "Do not ask to be mesmerised yourself; go and mesmerise your patients, — and depend upon it, that you will not only accomplish much benefit, but you will soon have a proof of the truth of my words." But far better would it be to quote the language of Bacon in his Essay on Seeming Wise. "It is a ridiculous thing," says he, "and fit for a satire of judgment, to see what shifts men have. . . . . Some think to bear it by speaking a great word, and being peremptory, and go on and take by admittance that which they cannot make good. Some, whatever is *beyond their reach will seem to despise*, or make light of it, as impertinent or curious, and so would have their *ignorance seem judgment*."

Here, then, is the position on which I take my stand, — and to which I respectfully invite the consideration of the scientific world, that be the

exciting or immediate cause, imitation, monotony, hysteria, imagination, or so forth, this accumulation of evidence, out of Germany, out of France, out of England, — and many other countries, proves beyond a doubt, that a strong curative effect in a certain class of diseases can be produced by what is called Mesmerism, — so strong indeed, — that the physician and the philanthropist are alike bound, for the sake of humanity alone, to give the subject the fullest and fairest trial.

But, says the "Christian Observer," all farther investigation is needless, — for the French commissioners have long ago decided the question. "Their report," it adds, "was full, candid, elaborate, and satisfactory." And the "commissioners proved that no magnetic influence was evolved," — and that "Mesmer stood convicted of being a conscious imposter."

Often as this statement has been rebutted, it is still necessary to go over the ground again. For not only must such a representation have its effect, but there is, moreover, a general impression afloat, that the decision of the French *savans* has been adverse to our system.

The Reviewer says, — "We are not aware whether the report of the commissioners has been reprinted, since the revival of these follies." And from the manner in which he treats the question, it may be doubted, whether he has read the

report himself, and has not taken his opinion, second-hand, from some careless or prejudiced writers. At any rate, I have read the report. I went last autumn to the British Museum, and read it carefully and analytically through. And the attention of my readers is requested, not only to the real representation as to how far that report goes, — but also to the important resolutions of a second and far more valuable commission.

It may, perhaps, be desirable that this statement be preceded by a slight sketch of Mesmer and of the proceedings of his opponents.

Animal magnetism, it is generally supposed, has been always more or less practised by a select class, who, through some means or other, had arrived at the discovery. Many names could be mentioned under this head. But be this as it may, it was about 1776, that Anthony Mesmer, a native of Switzerland, and a physician and resident of Vienna, who had been for some time making use of the common magnet in his medical practice, perceived that he was able to produce a variety of phenomena of a very peculiar character without the magnet at all, and by the influence of some power proceeding from his own body. Repeated experiments confirmed him in this opinion: he applied this new treatment extensively among the sick; great success attended him; and his name became notorious. He now

removed to Paris, as to a wider theatre for his labours. After a time considerable progress was made by him there in the dissemination of his views; patients of all ranks flocked to his house; he began to accumulate a large fortune; and the French government even offered a very handsome pecuniary remuneration for the communication of his secret.

Not satisfied with his success, Mesmer must needs put forth a theory. He contended that there was a *subtle fluid* pervading the whole universe, which was capable of being put into motion, and through which the most powerful effects could be obtained. He went at great length into an examination of this theory, on which it is now needless to dwell. But it is important to add that this theory was an essential part of his system, — that he pressed it strongly upon the attention of the learned; — and that this assumed subtle matter he designated by the name of the *magnetic fluid*, and his treatment of his patients he called *animal magnetism*.

But this was not all. His enemies say that Mesmer was not a really philosophic inquirer. Truth, for its own sake, and for the good of his species, was not his single aim. According to their statement, he invested his practice with a dramatic and unreal character; — he assumed a mysterious demeanour, — clothed his experiments with a magical obscurity, — assumed a mas-

querading costume, and was as much of the *char-latan* as of the scientific discoverer. All this, however, is as strongly denied by his partisans and followers.

These proceedings, however, attracted the attention of the wits at Paris. His medical brethren were in an uproar: the public journals attacked him; — the philosophers were disgusted; and few besides the sick were on his side. Yet Mesmer grew bolder and bolder: he asserted that "there is but *one health, one disease,* — and *one remedy;*" and this remedy, he said, was alone to be obtained through his *magnetic subtle fluid.*

Government at length took the subject up. The amiable and unfortunate Louis the Sixteenth issued a mandate in 1784, requiring a commission to investigate the matter. The commissioners appointed were some of them members of the Academy of Sciences, some of the medical faculty, and others of the Society of Physicians, and contained in their number a few remarkable names. Among them were Lavoisier, who might almost be called the father of modern chemistry; Bailly, whose subsequent fate in the French Revolution was so memorable and melancholy; Guillotin, who in the same revolution obtained such an unfortunate distinction from his recommendation of that slaughterous engine which was called after his name; Jussieu, the illustrious botanist; and, lastly, that great statesman-philo-

sopher of the other hemisphere, to whom has been so happily applied the line of the poet,

"Eripuit cœlo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis."

Of course, to men like these, to say nothing of the other able names that were included in the commission, the profoundest deference is due. Though authority cannot overthrow facts, yet still authority is to be heard with grave attention in a report on those facts; — and here the question is, how far these commissioners have decided, or *intended to decide*, against the facts of Mesmerism, — and how far their opinion goes in subverting the reality of the cures effected by its power.

The answer is, that they decided nothing on the subject: the facts they have left untouched; the cures in great measure undenied; their main drift and aim was *against the theory*.

It has been said, — in opposition to one of the statements of the "Christian Observer" in regard to the "candid" manner of their inquiries, — that the commissioners behaved most unfairly, — that their examination was incomplete and superficial, — and that they took but small trouble to observe. All this I cannot bring myself to believe; their names are a guarantee against any such imputations. Men like Bailly and his colleagues *must* have intended all that was fair and candid. But that their examination was "full or

satisfactory," I deny. That they entered upon the subject with strongly-formed prejudices is well known. Their experiments were not continuous enough, — were not followed up closely by the sames parties, and were not conducted in compliance with the rules required for their success; and with Lavoisier, the great chemical philosopher at their head, their object was to detect the presence of Mesmer's subtle fluid, and failing in that, they considered the real labours of the commission virtually at an end.

The idea of " utility " was not lost upon them; and one might have thought that such a view of the question would have interested Franklin, and secured a careful investigation. " Le Magnétisme Animal," says the Report, " peut bien exister sans être utile, mais il ne peut être utile, s'il n'existe pas." But the fact is, Franklin was not in good health at the time; and from the language of the Report, it would appear almost certain that he was not present at Paris during any of the experiments. The commissioners all went one day to his house at Passy; there a few experiments were made; there he himself was magnetised, and *felt no sensation;* and this imperfect examination and personal trial seems to have satisfied him. He signed the report; and his name therefore is always quoted as an authority on the subject; but the world must judge how far the opinion of a man, whose energies and bodily activity were

at that time in abeyance, can legitimately be claimed as decisive, especially after so brief and unsatisfactory an inquiry.

But the other commissioners, though, doubtless all in good faith, omitted, in their experiments, many conditions, which they were told were indispensable. They were not steady in their attendance; and the experiments, moreover, were not conducted in the presence or under the superintendence of Mesmer himself, — but of one of his pupils (D'Eslon), who afterwards protested against their reports (for there was more than one) as incorrect and unsatisfactory.

And what did these reports at length declare? Did they deny the facts? Rather they established their reality. They say that, having ascertained that this animal fluid cannot be perceived by any of our senses (les commissaires ayant reconnu que ce fluide magnétique animal ne peut être aperçu par aucun de nos sens), they came to the conclusion that nothing proves the existence of this magnetic animal fluid; — that, therefore, not being in existence, it cannot be useful; —(que rien ne prouve l'existence du fluide magnétique animal; que ce fluide, sans existence, est par conséquent sans utilité, &c.); and, consequently, they decided that some other theory must be brought forward to account for the facts (les effets).

The existence of many of these facts they acknowledge; they describe some of the most im-

portant phenomena; they mention many singular convulsions, involuntary movements, and *sympathies* (rien n'est plus étonnant que le spectacle de ces convulsions . . . des sympathies qui s'établissent.—*Rapport de Bailly*): but Mesmer's theory they consider null and void; — and declare that the reality of the fluid could only be proved by its *curative effects;* as if those curative effects were not, after all, the most essential point towards which the commissioners could look (son existence ne peut être demontrée que par les effets curatifs dans le traitement des maladies).

And what is the theory they offer in opposition? "Imagination," "Imitation," and "Touch;"—these they asserted were the causes of all that occurred. (De ces expériences, les commissaires ont conclu que l'imagination fait tout, que le magnétisme est nul. Imagination, imitation, attouchement, telles sont les vraies causes des effets attribués au Magnétisme Animal).

It is unnecessary to enter upon a refutation of their hypothesis;—all the commissioners attempted, was to pull down one theory, and build up another; — and this their Report, inconclusive, unsatisfactory, — and, if we may so speak of such men, unphilosophical in the extreme, — is declared by the Christian Observer, and other writers, to be decisive of the question, and as having convicted Mesmer of being a conscious impostor.

But, inconclusive even as the Report was, there

is yet a more noticeable shortcoming. One great name is wanting to the signatures. The virtuous and intelligent Jussieu,— he who in the study of botany is an authority of the first rank,— paid the closest attention to the proceedings; and, "notwithstanding the pressing solicitation of his colleagues, and the menaces of the minister, the Baron de Breteuil," refused to subscribe his name, and actually drew up a special Report of his own. In that Report he states that the "experiments he has himself made, and those of which he has been a witness, convince him that man produces upon man a decided action by friction (frottement), by contact, and, more rarely, by an approximation at a little distance; — that this action seems to belong to some animal warmth existing in the body; — and that *judged by its effects*, it occasionally *partakes of a tonic and salutary* result; — but that a more extended acquaintance with this '*agent*' will make us better understand its real action and utility." *

* "Que les expériences qu'il a faites, et dont il a été témoin, prouvent que l'homme produit sur son semblable une action sensible par le frottement, par le contact, et plus rarement par un simple rapprochement à quelque distance; que cette action, attribuée à une fluide universelle non démontrée, lui semble appartenir à la chaleur animale existante dans les corps; que cette chaleur émane d'eux continuellement, se porte assez loin, et peut passer d'un corps dans un autre; qu'elle est développée, augmentée, ou diminuée dans un corps par des causes morales et par des causes physiques; que, jugée par des effets, elle participe de la propriété des remèdes toniques, et produit comme eux des effets salutaires on nuisibles, sélon la quantité de chaleur communiquée,

Here then is a significant fact in the history of this science, which ought to have arrested the conclusions of the faculty. But Jussieu's counter-statements were laughed at and set aside. It was everywhere reported that the commissioners had put the matter to rest; and that large body of the public who never think for themselves, or care to distinguish, assumed that the refutation of the theory was a refutation of the facts; and so Animal Magnetism was considered as extinguished and buried for ever. While the stirring scenes of the approaching Revolution, and its sad and tragical horrors, and still more the wonders of Napoleon's reign, so diverted men's minds from the subject, that to the great mass of the French people the existence of Mesmerism was a forgotten fact in history.

But truth is eternal, and the triumph of its enemies but short-lived and inglorious. Though a passing cloud may overshadow it, and appear to darken the prospect hopelessly, it is only that it may shine forth with greater brightness than ever. As one of our most glowing writers says of certain favourite principles, "Though they fall, it is but to rebound;—though they recede, it is but to spring forward with greater elasticity; though they perish, there are the seeds of vitality in their very

et sélon les circonstances où elle est employée; qu'enfin un usage plus étendu et plus réfléchi de cet agent fera mieux connaître sa véritable action et son dégré d'utilité."—p. 50.

decay ;"— and so it is with truth and with the facts of Mesmerism. This exploded science "lived on," — "brokenly," indeed, as the poet says, — and "showing no visible sign" of existence ; — still it "lived on," — and after a time gradually began to increase, and then to flourish, and at last to lift up its head only higher than before. The "crushing report" of the commissioners had not killed it. Numbers of able and learned men still adhered pertinaciously to its cause. Schools were formed, — societies established for its promotion. The Marquis de Puysegur, a gallant soldier, devoted his whole soul and time to the treatment. His success was immense. The cures performed by him were numerous. In Germany, in France, more especially at Strasburg and Paris, the subject was taken up with as great zeal as previously ; and what is more to the purpose, with a judgment and sober consideration, and an utter absence of all *charlatanerie* and mystery.

So signal was the progress, that a decided sensation was now made on the medical world. A young physician at Paris, the amiable and learned Foissac, made a stirring appeal to his brethren in its behalf. In 1825, he addressed a memorial to the members of the Royal Academy of Medicine, pointing out the necessity of a fresh and more satisfactory inquiry. Without entering upon the details, let it be sufficient to state, that a SECOND COMMISSION was appointed ; that this commission consisted exclusively of medical men, some of

them of very high standing in their profession ;— that a most careful and scientific investigation took place ;— and that in 1831 a Report on their Magnetic Experiments was laid before the Academy. And what was the nature of this Report? Was it evasive, cold, neutral, condemnatory? It was satisfactory and decisive in the highest degree. After having given a most interesting and circumstantial account of their proceedings, they finish with a series of conclusions, to which they had arrived: they are thirty in number, and ought to be read, as well as the Report itself, by every one interested in the subject; space can only be afforded for a few extracts, but these are decisive enough. They say: —

8. A certain number of the effects observed appeared to us to depend upon *Magnetism alone*, and *were never produced without its application.* These are well established physiological and therapeutic phenomena.

29. Considered as a cause of certain physiological phenomena, or as a therapeutic remedy, *Magnetism ought to be allowed a place within the circle of the medical sciences;* and consequently, physicians only should practise it, or superintend its use, as is the case in the northern countries.*

* 8. Un certain nombre des effets observés nous ont parus dépendre du magnétisme seul, et ne se sont pas reproduit sans lui. Ce sont

And they conclude with saying,—"We dare not flatter ourselves with the hope of making you participate entirely in our conviction of the reality of the phenomena, which we have observed, and which you have neither seen, nor followed, nor studied along with us. We do not, therefore, demand of you a blind belief of all that we have reported. We conceive that a great proportion of these facts are of a nature so extraordinary, that you cannot accord them such a credence. . . . We only request that you would judge us as we should judge you,—that is to say, that you be completely convinced, that neither the love of the marvellous, nor the desire of celebrity, nor any views of interest whatever, influenced us during our labours."

This Report was signed by nine physicians. The two who did not sign did not consider themselves entitled to do so, from not having assisted at the experiments. The Report was laid before the Academy, who resolved that manuscript copies should be taken of it (faire autographier le Rapport). To this no objection was made: and the adversaries of Mesmerism resigned themselves, as far as the Academy was concerned, to an absolute silence on the subject. And from that hour,

des phénomènes physiologiques et thérapeutiques bien constatés.

29. Considéré comme agent de phénomènes physiologiques, ou comme moyen thérapeutique, le magnétisme devrait trouver sa place dans le cadre des connoisances médicales; et par consequent les médecins seuls devraient en faire où en surveiller l'emploi, ainsi que cela se pratique dans les pays du nord. — Foissac, *Rapports*, p. 206.

Mesmerism has been gaining ground in France, with such an impetus, that, as I before stated on very excellent authority, a fourth of the medical men in Paris are staunch upholders of the science.

"But," says the Christian Observer, with a pertinacity worthy of a better cause, "if the French Commissioners have not decided the question, Mr. Wakley has." "Mr. Wakley laid bare some of the impositions to the conviction of unprejudiced observers." "The wary coroner quietly slipped the wonder-working talisman (a piece of nickel) into a friend's hand, and substituted for it a piece of Queen Victoria's vulgar copper coin." "It was impossible that the hopeful young lady," — as the writer unbecomingly terms as respectable a person as himself, — "could have exhibited such characteristic indications of Mesmeric influence if she had not been duly nickelised." And the editor of the "Lancet" is for ever referring his readers to those identical proceedings, and assuming that there is no appeal from his infallible tribunal. It is a new sight to behold Mr. Wakley and the "Christian Observer" yoked together in the same car of "compact alliance." Misery, they say, makes us acquainted with strange companions; and a bad cause appears to have much the same result. Not that Mr. Wakley's opinions are undeserving of attention. Mr. Wakley has "done the state some service." His first establishment of the "Lancet" was a useful act: it emancipated

the minds of the junior members of his profession from a sluggish deference to official authority; and it often threw considerable light on some more than questionable proceedings within the different hospitals. In fact, it furnished an abundance of valuable information for all classes. Mr. Wakley's conduct in Parliament, in spite of his political ultraism, has been often marked by an honest detestation and exposure of abuse. And as a coroner, though occasionally officious and meddling, he has brought the reluctant authorities to a better knowledge of their duty. Still Mr. Wakley is not oracular on *every* subject. Clever as he is, he may, like other men, occasionally be mistaken, especially on points which he has little studied, and to which he comes for a novel and first experiment. He has so often enlightened the world with a description of what he tried in the cases of two of Dr. Elliotson's patients, that it is needless to repeat the story. It may be as well, however, to state, that it was in a set of experiments with nickel and lead, and which, he says, most egregiously failed, and proved the falsehood and imposition of the pretended sleepers. Those who have read Mr. Wakley's strictures should know that every charge has been again and again successfully answered. Dr. Elliotson, in the Letter to his Pupils on resigning his chair in University College, has entered fully into every part of the subject. Those who adopt the accusation should,

at least, look into the reply. They will there find it stated, that some part of the proceedings were "entirely suppressed." They will there see how necessary it is in an experiment with metals on the human frame to proceed with the greatest caution and observation. They will there learn what slight disturbing effects change the nervous condition of the patient, and alter and affect the result of the experiment. "He acted," says Dr. Elliotson, "as though Mesmeric susceptibility is always present, and *always the same;* whereas the reverse is the fact; and experiments with water and metals frequently repeated so derange the susceptibility that we are often obliged to desist." Many a school-boy has made the trial of tasting, with his eyes bandaged, alternate glasses of white and red wine, till at last his palate has become so disordered, that he has been unable to detect the difference, and know the one from the other. In Mesmeric experiments, whether in phreno-magnetism or with metals, it is indispensable with most patients that the action of the first experiment be removed, or wear off, before a second and different one be attempted. They will otherwise clash and injure each other. Time and the greatest nicety are requisite. The slightest circumstance may upset and disturb the patient, and so produce a *real failure* in the experiment, and a *seeming imposture* on the part of the sleeper. With some somnambulists the trial with metals is complete;

with others it is most uncertain. This is mentioned as a caution to those who quit a public lecture with their scepticism only the more strengthened, because the mesmerised metals have not obtained the promised effect. But waving all this for a moment, let us suppose that these two most respectable patients of Dr. Elliotson,—patients with whom the editor of a religious periodical might not be ashamed to be acquainted, — let us suppose that these two patients were "deluding," and "affecting to suffer," and, for "sordid gain," "pretending to respond to the magical control" of the magnetist. What then: does the cause of Mesmerism depend upon the truthfulness of one or two cases? Granted that they were false, it would be rather a strong inference to assume that every thing else were a mistake. What yet becomes of the thousand and one cases that could easily be counted up, if a careful statistical body of evidence were collected from all quarters? It is to facts without number that we appeal; to facts confirmed by experiment and observation; and a hundred failures, or a hundred cases of imposture, would detract but a small amount from the actual heap:

"Suave est ex *magno* tollere acervo."

But we must inform these cruel and thoughtless writers, who, for the sake of a pungent sentence,

care not what libels they scatter against amiable and unoffending women, that these two sister-patients of Dr. Elliotson were *not* impostors. One of them is most respectably married; and both have secured the good opinion of all who know them. But as one test of sincerity is better than fifty assertions, let us state an actual fact, and see how far it will serve as a set-off to Mr. Wakley's charges. Mr. Gibbon Wakefield, "as hard-headed and little credulous a man as exists," had often excused himself, when invited, from going to University College Hospital to witness the Mesmeric phenomena in the cases of these two sisters. At last he went, and was astonished; but still would not make up his mind to believe what he saw. "When the experiments were over, and he was passing through some part of the hospital to leave it, he accidentally noticed one of the sisters with her back to him, hanging over the balusters carelessly, and looking down, still in the Mesmeric delirium, and therefore highly susceptible. He thought this a favourable opportunity to test her, because he was satisfied that she could not see anything that he did. He made a pass behind her back at some distance with his hand directed to her, and she instantly was fixed and rigid, and perfectly senseless. He had sense enough to believe his senses, — and was now satisfied of the reality of all he had beheld."* This was a con-

* Zoïst, No. I. p. 83.

vincing fact; and might satisfy the brother-editors of the "Lancet" and of the "Christian Observer" of the truthfulness and honesty of the calumniated sleeper. A similar thing occurred to a friend of mine, as clear-headed and strong-minded a man as any of my acquaintance. He made a pass behind the patient's back (one of the sisters Okey), at Dr. Elliotson's house, when she was occupied in conversation with some one else, and was unconscious of his presence and intention. In truth, he was hardly conscious of the intention himself; for it was the thought and act of a moment. But the poor girl was instantly seized, and fell back in a state of torpor. The gentleman who told me this is no believer in Mesmerism: he merely mentioned it as a circumstance that occurred within his experience. Facts, however, such as these will receive the attention of the candid and the impartial; they refute the imputation of deception; — and it is by such plain statements that we reply to the heartless slanders of Mr. Wakley and his new ally, the "Christian Observer."

But if Mr. Wakley did not succeed in disproving the honesty of two excellent sisters, there was one thing in which he was eminently fortunate. The thunders of the "Lancet" had their intended effect on his medical brethren. Though anything but a favourite with them before, he henceforward became their pet authority. And strange to say he also became their terror. Fear-

ful of being hitched into a line of the next week's "Lancet," as believers in the so-called absurdity, some gentlemen straightway swallowed their rising convictions with wry faces and reluctant hearts; — while the remainder, almost to a man, refused for the future to be present at any Mesmeric demonstration whatsoever. Like Mr. M'Neile at Liverpool, they carefully retreated from the evidence of their own senses, but from a different reason altogether. My clerical brother judged that there was something supernatural in these cases; — he regretted that he had not faith to play the part of exorciser and bid the devil depart *, and from want of this faith would "*see nothing of it.*" But the fears of the liberal profession were of a different order. It was not of an evil spirit that *they* stood in awe; it was of Mr. Wakley,—of the evil genius of the "Lancet," — of the gibes and jeerings of a substantial, corporeal editor, before which they shrank rebuked. This was the demon whom they dreaded: and though we might have expected better things from such a body of men, it is a fact, that mainly through an apprehension of having their names brought forward before the public in the pages of a clever periodical, very many gentlemen turned their backs on the subject, and from that hour declined all invitations to visit and examine the

* See Sermon, p. 147.

phenomena for themselves. And thus it went on for a few years. The progress of Mesmerism was seemingly suspended in this country. It appeared stifled in its birth, an unlucky abortion, of which nothing more would be heard. But silently and steadily was it making way. A change was gradually coming on. Day by day fresh accessions were counted in its train. The leaven was fermenting; and even from the ranks of the faculty a few adherents occasionally dropped in. I hope that I may now say confidently that a better spirit has decidedly sprung up among them. In that noble profession, which is alike distinguished for its humanity, its ability, its love of science, its love of truth, its large and comprehensive philosophy, I believe that the far greater number would be ready to give, even to the hateful study of Mesmerism, the benefit of a faithful and dispassionate inquiry. I am sure that there are many who would cheerfully admit that the field of usefulness is enlarged by it, and the means of lessening human ills considerably extended. I know that there are several, who, at the risk of damaging their worldly prospects, do not hesitate to step forward fearlessly and manfully, as believers in, and practisers of, the calumniated science. More especially from among the *younger* members of the profession, there are to be found many zealous and talented men, taking a high and independent position, anxiously devoting

their attention to the study, gathering facts as they arise, and prepared to employ the aid of this new power among the means of cure at their disposal. *O si sic omnes!* For there are others, and particularly among the leaders * in more than one metropolis, who, to judge from their conduct and their language, would seem to have the same horror at being witnesses of Mesmeric phenomena, as *the bat has at the approach of light.* They sneer or smile when the subject is brought forward, according to their own turn of mind, or rather according to the temper of those with whom they argue. But *to be present,* — to have their names bruited about as testimonies of a fact, — to be unable to resist their own convictions, — to be unable to remain in the bliss of ignorance, — this is a position from which they fall back with a secret dread of approaching danger. They can be sharp-sighted enough in detecting nar-

* Apropos of *leaders* in a profession, Hume says that "Harvey is entitled to the glory of having made, by reasoning alone, without any mixture of accident, a capital discovery in one of the most important branches of science. He had also the happiness of establishing at once his theory on the most solid and convincing proofs; and society has added little to the arguments suggested by his industry and ingenuity. . . . It was remarked that *no physician in Europe, who had reached forty years of age, ever to the end of his life, adopted Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood,* and that his practice in London diminished extremely, from the reproach drawn upon him by that great and signal discovery. So slow is the progress of truth in every science, even when not opposed by factious or superstitious prejudices! He died in 1657, aged 79." — *Hume's History of England,* cap. 62.

rowness of spirit in any other quarter, — advocates for freedom of conscience in theology, — ameliorators of our criminal code in matters of jurisprudence, — liberal, tolerant, and haters of abuse ; — but the moment that Mesmeric influence is proposed as an auxiliary to their practice, that instant they are as sensitive, as angry, as staunch adherents of what is old, — as stout opponents of what is new, — as though the charter and privileges of their order were being jeopardied for ever! Doubtless, in all experiments of a strange and novel character, the public do expect from the medical profession the most cautious, slow, and deliberate frame of mind. They expect from their closer cognisance of subjects of this nature the most searching, scrutinizing, hesitating conduct. Nay, they would not even be displeased to see an inquiry carried on in a sceptical, unbelieving spirit. But still they *do* expect inquiry of some kind.* They do not ex-

* It would be unjust not to acknowledge, that many medical men, and some with whom I have the pleasure of being acquainted, have made a most fair and straightforward inquiry into the subject. But we too often meet with much of a contrary character. A letter was read to me from the West of England, saying, "We have had a lecturer on Mesmerism here; all our medical men were present, and behaved in the most brutal and outrageous way." A lady, where I was on a visit lately, said, "We have had a Mesmeric lecturer in our town: Mr. ——, a surgeon, behaved in the most bullying manner, and did all he could to intimidate the parties." In Norwich a Mesmeriser was recently giving a lecture. A most intelligent inhabitant of that city told me that many of the medical men "were furious" on the occasion. One of them, who was present, suddenly took out a

pect to see a subject of this important nature treated with the vulgarest vituperation and ridicule; its supporters stigmatised as credulous, its operators defamed as fraudulent, its patients mocked at as impostors. They do not expect to see the heads of a profession which piques itself pre-eminently on its liberality, exhibiting the bigotry of the priest, and the special pleading of the lawyer. Look, for instance, at what took place a few years back at the London University through the instigation and promptings of certain members of the faculty. Often is the world invited to sneer at the blind prejudices that disfigure the banks of the Isis; — often have the venerable doctors of Oxford been satirized for their love of the useless and the obsolete to the prejudice of some nobler branches of knowledge;

lancet and ran it deeply into the patient's finger *under the nail into the quick;* a part most exquisitely sensitive, as we all know: no expression of pain was evident at the time; but the poor boy suffered a good deal after he was awakened. I neither know nor wish to learn the name of the party who was guilty of this unmanly outrage. A strong feeling, I understand, has been entertained respecting him. But these are the ways in which an inquiry is conducted, — if conducted at all, rather than with a calm, patient, philosophic temper, solicitous of truth. A most acute observer, though no believer in Mesmerism, lately remarked to me: — "From what I read in different provincial papers, and from what I have heard from other quarters, it seems to me, that medical men attend these meetings, not with the humane desire of discovering a valuable auxiliary, but solely with the hope of detecting imposture." It is too nearly the truth. I have also read some curious accounts of what took place lately at Bedford and at Exeter. The conduct of certain parties to Mr. Vernon at Greenwich must be fresh in every one's memory.

but in spite of all the faults of Alma Mater, — in spite of all her past and present absurdities, I would contrast her conduct on a memorable occasion in academic history, with the intolerance and hatred of novelty that recently marked the more modern institution. Are the circumstances, for instance, under which Locke was expelled from Christ Church, one whit more disgraceful in themselves, than the treatment which induced Dr. Elliotson to withdraw his name from the Professorship in the University of London? Was the temple of science more liberal than the hall of logic? was the new foundation more friendly to enlightened investigations than the old? What, in short, were the respective circumstances of the two cases? In the ancient seat of learning, the timidity or servility of a dean and chapter expunged the name of the philosopher from the books of his college at the mandate of an arbitrary sovereign; James the Second was the real cause of the expulsion of Locke, though the University of Oxford had long endured a most unjust opprobium on the subject, till Lord Grenville cleared the matter up*: while in the model institution, the vacancy in the Professor's chair was the result of an opposition to physiological experiments on the part of *soi-disant* friends to scientific inquiry, — an opposition that was set on foot by Dr.

* See "Locke and Oxford," by Lord Grenville.

Elliotson's own colleagues, and carried out to its completion by the despotic members of a liberal council!

But this subject will bear a little further examination.

The University of London, or, as it has since been designated, University College, was originally formed on the most liberal principles. No tests,—no subscriptions were admissible;—but to promote the largest amount of knowledge amongst the largest number of students, was the projected theory of its friends and founders. The *stare super antiquas vias,*—the clinging to old usages,—the rejection of new truths,—this was the favourite charge against the elder Institutions; but with the rival establishment in Gower Street, an order of things was to arise which would lead men forward to fresh fields of knowledge. Nay, so liberal were they, that the very name of Religion was not to pass their threshold; each man was to do what seemed right in his own eyes; and worship his Creator (or not) after the fashion he liked best. "But," says a clever article in the Spectator Newspaper, "there are few, even among the most liberal, who apply their liberalism to every point. Some are liberal on commercial, some on theological, some on political, and some on juridical questions;—but beyond the pale of their own peculiar subject, they are often *as intolerant as ignorance*

can make them."* And thus, in the University of London, though every one was to be his own theologian, the same latitude was not granted in the matter of medicine. Here all was by precedent and prescription; here the conventional customs of the faculty were deemed sacred as the Thirty-nine Articles elsewhere; here, whatever was not stamped with the orthodox seal of the College of Surgeons, was shunned as a heresy, to be burnt by the hands of the common hangman. As for the spiritual state of the students,—for their immortal and better part, no matter what was the result with them; these young men might become Budhists, Mahometans, Atheists, or Muggletonians;—any thing they pleased, so long as their freedom of choice was not interfered with;—but for the perishing bodies of the sick, all must be done *selon les régles;* cure or relief was unimportant, so that the prejudices of the practitioner were not offended. Accordingly, when Mesmerism was introduced into the Hospital by their most distinguished Physician,—though the patients themselves were willing recipients,—though the most signal benefits were being daily experienced,—though the academies at Paris and Berlin had not thought the question beneath their notice,—this new,—this liberal,—this consistent University stepped forward to aim a blow

* Spectator, Nov. 11th, 1843.

at a science in its birth. The *free-thinking* Council met and passed the following Resolution:—

"Resolved, — That the Hospital Committee be instructed to take such steps as they shall deem most advisable to prevent the practice of Mesmerism, or Animal Magnetism, in future within the Hospital."

No sooner was this Resolution passed, than Dr. Elliotson *sent in his resignation.* It ought, however, to be made known that four Members of the Council, true to their own principles and to the great cause of humanity, constituted an honourable minority in a vote on a proposition that Dr. Elliotson should be invited back to resume his chair. These four were Lord Brougham*, Sir L. Goldsmith, Mr. Tooke, and Mr. Bishop. But the Council rejected the proposition.

And so much for the liberal University of London!

Look, for another instance, to what occurred not long ago in Manchester. When the British Association, in one of its erratic flights, was preparing to visit that city, and by aid of railway excursions in the morning, and concerts and conversaziones in the evening "cram" its money-

* Lord Brougham was not *then* a believer in Mesmerism. I believe that it is now understood, that this distinguished statesman, who has so strongly impressed the character of his mind upon the present generation, is a convert to the truth of this important science. With such a name on our side we can afford to be laughed at.

making population with the *arcana* of science, Mr. Braid*, a surgeon of that place, who had long devoted his attention to Mesmerism, offered a paper on the subject to the medical section, and proposed "*to produce as many of his patients as possible in proof* of the curative agency" of his particular system. He thought that "gentlemen of scientific attainments might thus have an opportunity of investigating the subject, unbiassed by local or personal prejudice." He himself "hoped to *learn something from others,* on points which were mysterious to him, as to the cause of the phenomena." And when we know the character of some of his alleged cures, — when we learn that many successful cures in paralysis, — in tic-douloureux, and in rheumatism, and of improvement in sight, were amongst them, the public might naturally conclude that these *savans* would gladly accept the offer, and bring their scientific knowledge to bear upon the subject. Here was a concentration of talent and philosophy met together; and now was a golden time for going into the question, and of putting down for ever a ridiculous pretension, or of satisfying their own minds as to the truth of the practice. But no: "The committee of the medical section declined entertaining the subject." As the professor at Padua refused to *look through* Galileo's

* See Braid's "Neurypnology, considered in relation with Animal Magnetism: illustrated by numerous cases of relief and cure of disease."

telescope at the moon; — so these gentlemen at Manchester were unwilling to *look at* Mr. Braid's patients, for reasons that can only be known to themselves. Either they had some secret misgivings, some fears touching their own conversion, some dread of having to *unlearn* much of their former acquirements, or the rules of the Association would not permit the arrangement, or their time, perhaps, at this important juncture was not quite at their disposal. As a committee of the British Association for the Advancement of Science could scarcely be afraid of meeting facts, — let us see how the matter stood with them in respect to time. On turning, then, to a record of their proceedings *, we find, that the "section was thinly attended,"— that several tedious papers were read, most of which could have been studied more profitably at home, — and that out of the six days on which the Sections met, there were two on which no business at all was transacted before the one for medicine, some part of which time might at least have been surrendered to Mr. Braid and his experiments, even if the rules of the society forbade a more formal lecture. These "learned Thebans" had flitted from their homes and travelled many a long and weary mile, and what was their object? Was it not the detection of error, the discovery of truth, and the good of human kind? and might not

* See Literary Gazette and Athenæum for 1842.

Mesmerism or Neurypnology fall under one of these classes? Oh! let us not be too severely critical:—the visit to Manchester was not wholly without fruit. While one party was listening to a learned treatise on the "*Palpi of Spiders*," by which the arachnologist "would be prevented from falling into the *too common error of mistaking young spiders for old ones**," another section was instructed by certain "microscopic researches in fibre," and on the "therapeutic application of air-tight fabrics." Released from these arduous duties, and this strain on their cerebral functions, our professors could only find repose by a promenade through the adjoining gardens; here where Flora and Pomona vied with their most tempting gifts, and the eyes of beauty smiled reward on the learned labours of the lecturer†, who could expect even an anchorite to tear himself away, and find leisure for Mesmerism with all its cures? And then came the banquet with its venison and its wines;—and then the self-applauding speeches, where one Section bepraised the other; and then followed music and the charm of song, till at length wearied out with this train of endless occupations, "Section E" could only recline their heads upon the pillow, with the self-satisfied assurance that they had not, like Titus, lost a day! To be se-

* See the reports in the Athenæum.
† See Times Newspaper and Literary Gazette.

rious, there is something melancholy in the state of mind here exhibited. These papers have their uses, and are valuable. But after all, the "proper study of mankind is man;"— the palpi of spiders are not so interesting as the nervous system of a patient; and when a subject like Mesmerism professes to mitigate the maddening throes of pain,— to give relief to thousands, — and to effect a cure, where a cure had been pronounced impracticable, to see men of education like those at Manchester pass over to the other side with offended dignity rather than be spectators of the fact, is a scene both painful and humiliating. The question ran counter to all their previous views, — and so with sullen silence they declined to witness an art which promises to multiply their remedial resources to an extent, at this moment beyond calculation.

Though Section E, however, declined to countenance Mr. Braid by their medical presence, a large body of visiters did not think his curious experiments beneath their notice, and his lectures were attended by a numerous and scientific audience.

Turn again, for a third example, to the proceedings of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society on a late occasion.* See the alarmed and almost frantic feelings with which certain parties

* See "Numerous Cases of Surgical Operations without Pain," &c., by Dr. Elliotson. (Baillière.)

discussed the remarkable report of the amputation of a man's thigh during the Mesmeric state.* See how anxious they were to put the matter down, and bury the fact in oblivion. A Bible thrown into an old Spanish convent, could not have more convulsed its inmates, than did this unfortunate treatise that learned assembly. Mr. Topham has much to answer for. The conscience of Mr. Ward must be weighed down with bitter self-reproach. True, these gentlemen established a great fact in physiology; true, they assisted an unhappy sufferer with unexampled relief during a formidable operation;—but they cannot be otherwise than painfully mindful of the bile and bad blood they engendered amongst the members of the society on that unlucky evening. Poor Wombell, indeed, enjoyed a composing sleep during the horrors of amputation; but contrast that with the sleepless feverish nights of the angry opponents, and then what has humanity gained in the matter? The thing was "irrational,"—was "ridiculous,"—was "impossible," and so what need was there for the Society to discuss the subject? Like a country bench of double-barrelled squires assembled to convict a suspected offender against the game laws, this philosophical audience ar-

* See "Account of a Case of successful Amputation of the Thigh during the Mesmeric State, without the Knowledge of the Patient." Read to the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society, November, 1842, by W. Topham, Esq., and W. S. Ward, Esq. (Baillière, Regent Street.)

rived at a "foregone conclusion," before the merits of the case had even been opened. The Mesmeriser and the poacher must both be silenced:—the one has no licence to kill, nor the other to cure; and so defence or explanation are alike inadmissible. One gentleman declared that he would not believe the facts had he witnessed them himself. Another expressed his perfect satisfaction with the condemnatory reports made by others, and *par conséquent*, the needlessness that he should be *present and examine them himself!* Really, in passing through the account of this debate,—in noting the anxiety of certain members to expunge all record of the proceedings from their minute-book, I could have fancied that I was reading the discussions of a knot of mendicant friars, terrified at the dawn of the Reformation;—I felt myself transplanted, as it were, into the Vatican, where was a letter from Luther, frightening the holy conclave from its propriety. All the time that I was reading the speeches of certain opponents, there kept involuntarily rising up in my mind the outcry of Demetrius, the Ephesian silversmith, "Our craft is in danger to be set at nought: and, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth." (Acts, xix. v. 25. 27.) One would suppose that these gentlemen would remember the treatment of Harvey, the *circulator*, as he was termed;—the averted eye that at first was turned on Jenner; and the disbelief with

which many great and mighty discoveries have been received, and be more cautious and circumspect for the future. Oh! if a love of ancient usages, — if a hatred of new and unpalatable truths is to bear away the bell, Oxford may now hide her diminished head, — Salamanca "pale her uneffectual fires," — the doctors of the Sorbonne part with their old pre-eminence, for competitors are stepping in from the "liberal professions," able and willing to take the lead. And yet we are all aware of the sarcasms with which "the faculty" and the "philosophers" treat the "learned ignorance" of the clergy, and their presumed dislike to scientific inquiry; and perhaps we are too often a fair subject for such animadversion, more especially if many such sermons as the one preached at Liverpool, are delivered by us: but I can tell "the profession," in return, that I should often have more hope of bringing home a new and important truth to the minds of a simple ignorant peasantry than of combating successfully the bigotry of the philosopher, and the prejudices of an educated and scientific assembly. Yes: save me from the credulity of the sceptic, — from the intolerance of the tolerant, — from the tyranny of the ultra-liberal! Experience has shown us some of the bitterest opponents of real freedom of conscience amongst the staunchest sticklers for religious liberty; we daily see men,

who will *believe nothing*, even upon the strongest testimony, in contradiction to their preconceived systems, *believing everything* against the veracity and competency of the most credible witnesses*; —and here we have had a free-thinking council opposed to freedom of inquiry,—and a body of gentlemen, whose whole professional career is based on experimental evidence, on one occasion declining to witness facts, and upon another, thrown into a confusion, worse than that in King Agramont's camp†, from the recital of a case, which, even if attended by a few erroneous conclusions, was at least deserving of a candid investigation.

* "I would rather believe," said a surgeon to a friend of mine, "that *all* Mesmerisers and their patients were impostors, than give credit to one of their facts, however well authenticated." "You must rather believe," said an anti-mesmeric lecturer, "that all your wives and sisters and children are false, than think any of these cases true."

† The wild and fanciful poet describes Discord as hastening with her *bellows* to blow up the strife:—

"La Discordia . . .
Corre a pigliare *i mantici* di botto,
Ed agli accesi fochi esca aggiungendo,
Ed accendendone altri, fa salire
Da *molti cori* un alto incendio d'ire."

Orlando Fur., canto xxvii. 39.

From all accounts there were no *bellows* wanted that evening in Berners Street. The fire was kindled before the match was applied. — Gibbon sneers about the "Monks of Magdalen," and the "port and prejudice" they imbibed. The monks of Magdalen, with their venerable president, may now turn the tables against their liberal scoffers. — What is the favourite beverage of the Chirurgical Society, I know not. A friend, more witty than wise, suggests that, to judge from the temper of the meeting, the potations that night must have been gin and *bitters*.

It is the remark of an acute and observant friend, that no great reform or improvement in a profession has ever proceeded from its own members. One or two may have originated the idea; — but the adoption of the plan has generally been forced on them from "without." This is eminently true in regard to ecclesiastical matters. They were not the clergy but the laity that led on the movement in Church reform. The same may be said in regard to law. The illustrious Romilly commenced his parliamentary career with propositions for an amendment of our criminal code; but it is notorious how unpopular in Westminster Hall were his suggestions; and it was public opinion alone that carried out his views. Again, may the same remark be applied to the medical body. Men of a certain standing in the profession are unwilling to depart from the old routine; they are afraid of losing *caste;* they care not to *unlearn* their early teaching, and begin with some fresh laws of nature, of which they were unaware; and so, sooner than sacrifice themselves they sacrifice truth. It is thus in the instance of Mesmerism. It was a medical man that first discovered it; but they were not medical men that took it up; — and their attention, — must we say their unwilling attention, was at at last obtained, only through the firm attitude that their own patients often displayed on the question. And yet, even if Mesmerism had been

an unreal phantom, — there were reasons why they need not have felt such shame in looking it impartially in the face. Great names could be numbered amongst its adherents. Some of the first men of our day, — the first in science and philosophy, have not blushed to express their strong convictions of its truth. That can be no common delusion upon a subject, on which La Place, the most profound and exact of mathematicians, could state, that "on his own principles he could not withhold his assent to it;" — and on which he could write, that "it would be unphilosophical to deny the existence of the phenomena, because in the present state of our knowledge, their operations are yet inexplicable to us."* That can be no weak fancy, when Cuvier,

* Mr. Chenevix states, in the London Medical and Physical Journal, that he had more than one conversation with La Place upon Mesmerism, about 1816 and 1817, and that the expression of that great philosopher constantly was, "that the testimony in favour of the truth of Mesmerism, coming with such uniformity from enlightened men of many nations, who had no interest to deceive, and possessed no possible means of collusion, was such that, applying to it his own principles and formulas respecting human evidence, he *could not withhold his assent to what was so strongly supported.*" The following are his own words, in his Essay on Probabilities: "Les phénomènes singuliers qui résultent de l'extrême sensibilité des nerfs dans quelques individus, ont donné naissance à diverses opinions sur l'existence d'un nouvel agent, que l'on a nommé magnétisme animal: * * * Il est naturel de penser que l'action de ces causes est très-faible, et qu'elle peut être facilement troublée par des circonstances accidentelles; ainsi, parceque dans quelques cas, elle ne s'est point manifestée, on ne doit pas rejeter son existence. Nous sommes si loin de connaître tous les agens de la nature, et leurs divers modes d'action, qu'il serait peu philosophique de nier les phénomènes, uniquement

by common consent the first of modern naturalists, could say, that "the effects produced by Mesmerism no longer permit it to be doubted, that the proximity of two living bodies in certain positions and with certain actions, has a real result, independent of all participation of the imagination." * That can be no weak or unworthy study, to which a Brougham, he whom all parties are anxious to claim as an ally, — he who has run the round of science, and explored each department of knowledge at once with a philosophic and critical spirit, could give the attention of his vast intellect, and not feel it a degradation to his judgment to be spoken of as a believer in its facts. That can be no vague notion, of which a Hufeland, — if not the first, in the very first rank of German physicians, has expressed himself a firm and conscientious supporter. The catalogue of able and superior men that could be found among the

parcequ'ils sont inexplicable dans l'état actuel de nos connaissances." — La Place, *Essai Philosophique sur les Probabilités.* Paris. 4th edition, p. 131.

* This is Cuvier's own language: "Cependant les effets obtenus sur des personnes déja sans connaissance avant que l'operation commençat, — ceux qui ont lieu sur les autres personnes après que l'operation même leur a fait perdre connoissance, et ceux que présentent les animaux, ne permettent guères de douter, que la proximité de deux corps animés dans certaines positions et avec certains mouvements, n'ait an effet réel, indépendant de toute participation de l'imagination d'une des deux. Il paroit assez clairement aussi que ces effets sont dus à une communication quelconque qui s'établit entre leurs systêmes nerveux." — Cuvier, *Anatomié Comparée,* tom. ii. p. 117. "Du Systême nerveux considéré en action."

friends of the science would run on to "the crack of doom." From my own experience I assert, that those of my acquaintance who are its known and confessed believers, are as clear-headed, — as strong-minded, as sober-thinking, as free from that wild enthusiastic feeling which prompts men to catch at the newest fancy, as any individuals in the kingdom. All of them, I think without exception, were strong unbelievers, if not opponents, till they practically and experimentally looked into the question. Verily, if we are mistaken, we belong to a goodly company! We have plenty of comrades to keep us in countenance. We can bear a laugh at the number or quality of our friends. Let the wits, then, exhaust their raillery at our expense; let the prejudiced shake their heads and sneer; let the timid and the cautious hold back for a season in doubt. Truth, eternal truth, must be our motto. The more we dive into the subject, the more shall we have to learn; the more the science is practised and employed, the more will the philanthropist have reason to rejoice at the virtues of the discovery:—and the more will the humble and thankful Christian be enabled to exclaim, "It is the gift of a merciful and allwise God!"

CHAP. V.

DANGERS OF MESMERISM, PHYSICAL AND MORAL. — "HORROR" OF MESMERISM. — DIFFICULTIES OF MESMERISM. — HINT FOR YOUNGER MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY.

But we have another and a third class of opponents, widely different indeed in the quality of their objections from either of the two parties with whom we have been hitherto contending, whose antipathy to Mesmerism professes to arise from a consideration of its *dangers*. It is not on the irreligious character of Mesmerism that they dwell; at that view of the question they shrug their shoulders and sneer, as if they themselves had never advanced it. It is not that they are unbelievers in Mesmerism: the facts brought home to their knowledge are so staggering, that they are ashamed to remember that they ever had their doubts. It is of the *dangers* of Mesmerism that they now speak: "It is so fearful a power," they say, — "so liable to be abused, — so pregnant with mischief, — no one is safe, — no one can answer for what may happen, — its practice ought to be prohibited:" — and all this is gravely stated by those with whom, but a few weeks before, we had been fighting, *totis viribus*, — in assertion of its reality.

Deleuze, in his practical work, says, "The antagonists of magnetism, after having decided that it did not exist, have declaimed against the dangers that accompany it." * Every Mesmeriser will confirm this statement from his own experience. It has happened to all of us, over and over again. I was on a visit with some friends last summer, whom I in vain endeavoured to convince of the truths of Mesmerism; an incredulous but polite smile settled on their faces: so perceiving that the subject was unwelcome, I passed on to another topic. I met them again in the course of two months. It was now their turn to begin: they were full of the subject: but it was altogether of its dangers that they now harangued. "Dangerous!" I calmly observed, — "you surprise me: how can a thing that does not exist be dangerous?" "Oh," was the reply, "*everybody knows that there is something in Mesmerism,* and it is so *very* dangerous."

The transition of these views on Mesmerism is as abrupt as Napoleon described the passage to be of the sublime to the ridiculous: "it is but a step." Extremes, in fact, are always meeting. One day there is nothing in Mesmerism: the next, a great deal too much.

* "Les antagonistes du magnétisme, après avoir prononcé qu'il *n'existe pas,* ont *déclamé contre les dangers* qui l'accompagnent." — DELEUZE, *Instruction P.*, p. 265.

The first French commissioners, whose Report is supposed to prove the non-existence of Mesmerism, also speak of its dangers, and decide positively that its effects may be most serious. A novice in the first elements of logic would see, that a thing that does not exist, can be neither useful nor dangerous; and hence we derive an additional corroboration, that it was not the purpose of the commissioners to do more than disprove the theory of the fluid.

That Mesmerism has its dangers, must be admitted: what good is there in nature free from some attendant evil? what is there that folly or wickedness may not abuse? Still I am persuaded that the actual amount of these dangers is very greatly exaggerated. The invisibility of the agent,—our ignorance of the true springs of man's organisation, the novelty of the remedy, and our natural timidity at the employment of a new mysterious treatment, all these circumstances would cast a deeper shade of colouring over that danger which may really exist: — but having taken much pains to examine the subject, and discussed it often with some of the most experienced Mesmerisers, I feel assured that the apprehensions generally entertained are to a great degree without foundation. Still it must be owned that Mesmerism has its dangers: and as a work that professes to meet all the popular objections, would be incomplete without some allu-

sion to them,—we will state what they are, and how they may be met.

The dangers may be divided into the physical and the moral.

I would begin, however, with the remark, that Mesmerism is not a plaything for the idle and the curious.—It is not meant as a pastime for a dull day in the country. Because a sharp frost has set in, and the hounds cannot meet at cover, or a deluge of rain has imprisoned the listless sportsmen, and the young squire, to kill the dreary morning, tries his hand in the new art, and Mesmerises his sisters or their lady's maid, and something unpleasant occurs, is that to be laid to the door of Mesmerism? It would appear from certain anecdotes, that animal magnetism is to supply the place of some of those old Christmas amusements, of which our altered habits have destroyed the charm; and thus "philosophy in sport" is to become really a part of an evening's entertainment. How absurd and monstrous all this is! And then grave ladies very naturally look solemn and forbidding, and make not a few unreasonable remarks on the impropriety of Mesmeric experiments. But who would think of vaccinating a whole family for a little domestic diversion? who dreams of insinuating the lancet's point into the arm of some plethoric uncle, to see how the good gentleman would feel after a little festive depletion? And why is Mesmerism

to be an exception to every rule of conduct on such a subject? As Mr. Colquhoun observes most judiciously, "In attempting to produce the magnetic phenomena, I would eminently caution individuals against all experiments of mere curiosity. Whatever ludicrous ideas many persons may have been hitherto in the habit of associating with this subject, I can seriously assure them that experience has proved magnetism to be no trifling matter. . . . . We must not recklessly attempt to handle the thunderbolt, or to play with the lightning of heaven. Like every higher gift conferred upon us by the Creator, the magnetic faculty ought to be exerted with judgment and discretion, and *only for benevolent purposes.*" "We do not know," says Dr. Hufeland, "either the essence or the limits of this astonishing power: whoever, then, undertakes to direct this power, let him enter upon the duty with the most profound respect for the principle which he endeavours to set in operation. Above all, *let him beware of Magnetizing in sport.* In medicine, the most indifferent remedy is injurious to persons in health; still more so an agent which is perhaps the most active and energetic of all remedies." All these observations deserve serious attention: I would say even further, that every thing of a useless or jocose character connected with the practice, should be discountenanced in the strongest way: children should be especially warned against

"playing at Mesmerism:" and if the above is what is meant by the opponents of magnetism in their remarks upon its dangerous consequences, I agree with them most cordially, — and have always done my utmost within my own circle to discourage such improper and discreditable trifling.

This part of the subject, then, I at once dismiss as foreign to the question. The abuse of a power is no argument against its use: and because Mesmerism is not a fit game for foolish girls to play with, this is no reason, why it should be preeminently hazardous, when adopted seriously as a remedial art.

Still, even in this line, Mesmerism may have its dangers, especially when practised by the ignorant and the timid. A nervous Mesmeriser is worse than a nervous patient. The calm collected manner of the judicious Magnetist will soothe the most agitated sleeper; but even the tranquil repose of the deepest slumber may be disturbed by a sympathy with the frightened and unpractised manipulator. But what is there strange or unusual in this? why are not experience and competency equally necessary in Mesmerism, as in every thing else? who employs a raw surgeon for a formidable operation? who sends for an untried dentist to extract a difficult and decayed eye-tooth? Skill, practice, knowledge are qualifications that are requisite in every de-

partment; and in no treatment are coolness and presence of mind more essential than in the direction of the Mesmeric power; a fact which ought to be evident to all when they reflect that this agent "penetrates the depths of the organism and the internal life of the nervous system, and may even affect the mind itself, and unsettle its ordinary relations." This is the language of the great Dr. Hufeland himself, in the cautions that he gives to the unwary Magnetiser. But even with the drawback of inexperience and ignorance, I know not that Mesmerism is so dangerous as much of the common medical practice of the present day. When we remember that such tremendous poisons as prussic acid and arsenic are among the favourite remedies of the modern school; that our lives are at the mercy of an incautious physician in the first act of prescribing; that an error in weight of the deadly ingredient may alter the whole character of the compound; that a careless chemist may convert the most judicious prescription into a draught of death; that a sleepy nurse may administer the wrong medicine; — who can think of these and similar contingencies, and not tremble when he sees the physician with the pen in his hand? These things are mentioned, — not to prove that Mesmerism has not its dangers; — but to show the timid and unthinking opponent that the very system to which from custom he steadily adheres, has its

evils and its hazards also, perhaps even greater than those of our ill-understood art.

Still Mesmerism has its dangers. Among them I would more especially mention those that may arise out of the alarm of an inexperienced practitioner. If a change quite unexpected should take place in the sleeper, — if the trance should be prolonged to an unusual duration, — if convulsions, or fits, or violent pain (all, in every probability, symptoms of the desired action) should come on; the inexpert Mesmeriser might take fright; his fright would act sympathetically upon the sleeper; great excitement and agitation would be the result; this again would react on the Mesmeriser; till from the mutual effect on each, very serious consequences might be produced. The health of the patient might be affected most alarmingly: but all this would be the fault, not of Mesmerism, — but of the ignorant nervous operator, who had undertaken a duty for which he was not prepared.

In all these emergencies, the calm judicious Mesmeriser sees nothing to fear: he knows that the most violent hysteric action is often the sign of a welcome crisis; — he knows that the most prolonged sleep — a sleep even of days, will wear itself out at last; he knows that the most threatening language and aspect of the sleepwaker (like that of a person in a deranged condition) can be best met by coolness and kindness: he is conse-

quently firm, collected, gentle; his calmness and firmness act healthily on the patient; and however great may have been the excitement of the Mesmeric state, the patient is sure to awake out of his slumbers, refreshed and strengthened, with the mind beautifully composed, and the whole system renovated to an extraordinary degree.

It is here not unadvisable to give a caution by the way. If the sleeper cannot be awakened by the usual methods, and the uneasiness of the Mesmeriser has acted with an unpleasant or exciting effect, to *send for a medical man*, who disbelieves in the science, and would treat it as a common normal state, *might be followed by the most serious consequences.* I cannot impress my readers too strongly with the necessity of bearing this caution in mind. Calmness and patience would bring all round.

Another point on which inexperience may be thrown off its guard, and through which very formidable results might arise, is the danger of an imperfect partial waking. With some patients it is not always easy to distinguish at first the half state from full and restored consciousness: the patient seems perfectly awakened, and says he is so; and the unpractised operator would be apt to leave him. This is a condition of real danger: the patient has no more self-control, or management of his actions, than a child or idiot, and yet for a time will converse most sensibly, and recog-

nise every person present. I have seen this distinctly in two patients. It happened to me one time with Anne Vials, whom I could not manage thoroughly to awaken: she said she was awake; and she walked about the room, and eat and talked as usual. I was on the point of leaving her, being persuaded that she was awake, when the sound of something peculiar in her voice caught my ear; I recognised it to be the tone of the sleeping, and not the waking state (for the tones are often different); and I soon had reason to discover that she was not awakened. The French call this state "un somnambulisme imparfait." Townshend, in his "Facts," mentions a case of the kind. It is not uncommon, and should be watched; as the patient might commit some action, serious in its consequences not only to himself but to others.

Several other minor points might be mentioned; for some of which I would refer the reader to the fuller work of Deleuze: his "Practical Instruction" is a most useful book for the young Mesmeriser.

Still I repeat that the physical dangers of Mesmerism are very greatly exaggerated; and I would conclude this part of the subject with a noticeable fact: that in spite of the number of ignorant Mesmerisers that are taking up the subject, — in spite of the number of most delicate patients that have been placed under its influence, — in spite of the number of opponents that are anxiously on the look-out for a disastrous result — no well-

authenticated fact of great and serious mischief has yet been named. I rather wonder that it is so; Mesmerism must, like every thing else, have its drawbacks and its dangers. Still nothing very formidable has yet been publicly mentioned: now and then we read in the newspapers of a "fatal effect;" but in a few days we find a paragraph saying that the patient is better than ever. Now and then we hear in our own circle of something deplorable, which, on examination, proves to be a mistake. I was told the other day of a gentleman who had greatly injured the eyesight of one of his children by Mesmerism. I called and asked if it were true: he had never even Mesmerised one of his children; and nothing had been the matter with their eyes. And thus it generally is; and several friends who have taken some pains to make the inquiry, have never yet been able to establish one case of serious injury or evil: still my opinion is, that Mesmerism has its dangers, and some, too, of rather an anxious kind. I say, therefore, to the inexperienced Mesmeriser,—"Be cautious, be circumspect; you are playing with a powerful and ill-understood agent; and you are bound for the sake of the patient's safety to adopt every precaution that prudence can suggest."

But there are certain dangers touching *la morale* to which Mesmerism is supposed to be peculiarly open, and respecting which allusion is often made in conversation. Much ignorance also exists on

this point; and here, too, it is necessary to distinguish clearly as to what is intended by the charge.

If it is meant, that under the *pretext* of Mesmerising, in a case where Mesmerism is not required, parties can avail themselves of the occasion to commit an offence *contre les bonnes mœurs*, I am not careful to enter upon the objection. Men sometimes go to church from the most improper motives; men sometimes read the Scriptures with no other view than that of finding food for ribaldry and unbelief; still, as has been often said, who would shut up our churches or burn our Bibles on that account? Again, we say the abuse of a thing proves nothing against its value. If parties, in sport or in thoughtlessness, throw themselves into the power of an unprincipled acquaintance, with them lies the fault, and they must take the consequences. Still I have my doubts whether Mesmerism does afford the easy opening for misconduct, with which it has been taxed. The deep sleep, or torpor, which would place the sleeper so completely at the mercy of the Mesmeriser, as to give an opportunity for evil, does not occur every day; — and more generally, *if not always*, the Mesmeric state produces, on the part of the patients, such a high tone of spirituality and sense of right, as to make them less than ever disposed to an acquiescence in what is wrong.

Still, into this view of the question I do not enter. Our question is, whether, in the treatment of the sick, and in regarding Mesmerism as a serious remedy, the influence be open to objections on the score of morality and *les bienséances?* I answer, in the most unhesitating way, to no objections whatsoever. In Mesmerism, as in every thing else, certain precautions and regulations are, of course, to be adopted; and in default of those precautions, why is the science to be blamed for the neglect of its own rules? Who sends for a low pettifogging attorney to make his will, or conduct an important lawsuit? who deposits his money with a banker that offers ten per cent. interest with no visible capital at command? who admits an unprincipled physician into his house? Only let similar safeguards be employed in Mesmerism; and nothing need be feared. — Not only should the Mesmeriser be a person of character, of known and established principle; but even then it is the rule that the process should be conducted in the presence of a third party. All Mesmerisers require an attention to this rule where it can be observed. Patients have it in their power to have any of their relations present when they like. — Let this regulation be remembered and carried out; and where is the objection? Not only is every needful security obtained by this course, but "the appearance, even, of evil" is avoided; and the good work cannot be ill-spoken of, or mis-

represented by the malicious neighbour or the *candid friend.*

Another objection is, that even in the presence of a third party the process is one, *qui blesse les convenances;* and that the treatment is what a father or brother would feel a pain in witnessing. Never was there a more unfounded mistake. I have seen a good deal of Mesmerism, and with different Mesmerisers; and never observed any thing to which the most scrupulous delicacy could object. An evil-disposed chemist may administer a valuable drug in an improper way, and with an improper object;—but what argument is that against the drug? Choose a Mesmeriser of character, and choose a confidential friend or relative for a witness, and you have every guarantee that the management of the case will be such as the most fastidious would require.

Another objection is, that the sleeper is placed in an undesirable state of feeling in regard to the Mesmeriser; that there is an attraction towards him,—something amounting to affection, or even love; and that this state of mind or feeling reduces the patient to an improper dependence on the will of another. That, in the Mesmeric state, the sympathy between the Mesmeriser and the sleeper is powerful and extraordinary, we all know; it is one of the most curious phenomena. The sensibility that is then produced, is singular in the extreme. But the feeling is rather that which

exists between two sisters than any thing else; it is a feeling which has regard to the happiness, and the state of moral being of the Mesmeriser; which is alive to injuries or pain inflicted on him,—which *desires his well-being here and hereafter.* That it goes in any way beyond this is a mistake. Nay, as was before remarked, so far from the Mesmeric sleep producing a state of feeling inconsistent with what is right, it is considered by the most experienced operators, that a great increase of the moral perceptions is created and brought out; and that if the Mesmeriser were capable of commanding an improper or reprehensible act, the patient would revolt from an obedience to his will, with a language and manner even more decided and peremptory than when in a waking state. And in confirmation of this view, I can decidedly state from observation, that the intellectual faculties are surprisingly increased and developed in the sleep;—so much so, as to lead to the opinion that there is a general rise and *exaltation of the whole moral being* when under the Mesmeric influence. Be this, however, as it may,—and be the relation between the Mesmeriser and the patient however peculiar, the whole sympathy and attraction are at an end and forgotten the moment the sleeper is awakened into actual existence.

Another objection is the facility with which unconscious parties can be put to sleep against their will,—that "no one is safe,—no one can

feel sure as to what may happen, and that a powerful Mesmeriser has his whole acquaintance under his command." This is a view entertained among the nervous and the timid; — but one more groundless can hardly be mentioned. Except in certain most rare cases of extreme sensibility, the Mesmeric sleep could not be induced against the will or consciousness of the party Mesmerised. Certain conditions are requisite. Silence and stillness are among the most indispensable. It may often require half an hour of the most profound repose, before any somnolency can be obtained; and with many patients the Mesmeric action must be renewed for several days in succession before any effect be procured. The whole objection, therefore, is so absurd, that no notice of it would be necessary, were it not that the opinion on this point is so very universal, and one that has led the superstitious to their worst apprehensions against the science.

Somewhat akin to the last objection is another class of feelings that should not be passed over; I mean a vague undefined "horror" of Mesmerism generally, a mysterious dislike to it, — an opposition which the party objecting would find difficult to put into a tangible shape, but which yet fills the mind with an unpleasant sensation respecting it. This is distinct from an opinion of its irreligious or Satanic character; without adopting that

view of the subject, many persons regard Mesmerism with an indistinct and painful abhorrence. Here, again, we must distinguish and clearly understand what they *do* dislike. If they dislike the abuses to which the practice is liable, if they dislike to see it made the subject for trick and foolish experiment,—we can inform them that all right-minded Mesmerisers participate strongly in their feelings, and hold such conduct as most revolting and wicked. But if they dislike to see a racking pain removed by it,—to see the feverish sleepless invalid enjoying a balmy slumber by its aid,—to see the nervous excited patient restored to comfort and repose,—surely their feelings can only arise from prejudice, or rather from the novelty and freshness of the art. It is nothing else than what is even yet experienced among the uneducated classes respecting vaccination. Large numbers entertain a "horror" of this remedy. How often has the wife of a labouring-man told me that she would not have her child infected with the disease of a cow! It is objectionable to her, only because it is strange. And so is it with the present aversion to Mesmerism. Habit and observation will soon remove this feeling. The strangeness will pass away. People will soon perceive what a simple, easy, and natural process Mesmerism is; and when, day after day, they shall be privileged to witness some dear and beloved

relative relieved or comforted by its means,—or when they themselves, after the agonies of pain, shall have found a respite or a cure, their horror will soon be turned into gratitude to the Author of all good, and with myself they will exclaim that Mesmerism is the gift of God!

But though the dangers of Mesmerism have been magnified into an importance which they do not deserve,—and which, for the most part could be avoided by prudence, still our science has its Difficulties. These difficulties somewhat arise from the infancy of the practice, and which the experience of a few years will tend to diminish; still they are considerable. It is easy to say to some unhappy sufferer, whom all the usual methods of the healing art have failed to benefit, "Go and be Mesmerised,"—the difficulty is to find a Mesmeriser. They are not so easily obtained. The highest qualifications are requisite. Added to which the treatment of a chronic case generally demands a sacrifice of time, which, even if men have the inclination, they have not always the leisure to bestow. Experience and knowledge are also indispensable: I should be sorry to place a very delicate patient into the hands of an unpractised Mesmeriser. Temper, patience, and presence of mind are also requisites; and as we before stated, character and right principle must not be forgotten.—Here then are a number of

qualities desirable for the formation of a competent Mesmeriser, and which are not to be procured at a moment's warning. And this, for the present, throws a difficulty in the work. It retards its course of more extended usefulness. Still time will correct this inconvenience. What the public demands, the public will always find provided ere long. As there is every certainty that Mesmerism will shortly take its rank among the established branches of the medical art, a supply of qualified practitioners will be soon forthcoming. Our difficulties are but temporary. Many junior members of the profession will devote themselves to the study, and obtain a standing in society by their experience and success. Others, whose time is less at their command, will only give a general superintendence; while the actual treatment will be conducted by pupils, specially instructed for the work. Nurses will be taught to Mesmerise. Students in the hospitals will gradually bring themselves into notice by a useful exercise of their power; and when the drag-chain, which hinders the progress of the good cause, shall be removed by the retirement of the present Lecturers and Managers, these invaluable public institutions will become at the very request of the subscribers schools for the practice of the Mesmeric science. In short, every thing looks fair and promising. Our obstacles are abating every day. Prejudice is becoming more and more silent. Fanaticism

is retiring to a few select quarters. Ridicule is losing the sharpness of its edge. The timid begin to speak. The opponents display greater anger and abuse. A general interest is awakened. We have evidently reached a crisis. Our difficulties have been long and many: but

"Time and the hour run through the roughest day!"

CHAP. VI.

MESMERIC CURES AND MIRACLES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. — COMPARISON BETWEEN THEM. — FEARS OF THE CHRISTIAN GROUNDLESS. — TOUCH OF THE MESMERISER. — CLAIRVOYANCE NOT MIRACULOUS.

But a more anxious consideration remains behind. The very truthfulness of Mesmerism carries along with it a perplexing apprehension. Its dangers may be proved in great measure chimerical; — its difficulties may be surmounted; — its curative powers may be admitted in all their magnitude; — the charge of an evil agency may be rejected as the product of that heated fancy which invades the mind at the appearance of novelty; — and yet well-regulated minds may approach the discussion with a distressing reluctance. Another argument presents itself. The subject appears to trench on the most sacred ground. It threatens to work a revolution in the most awful questions that can interest man. It unsettles the very groundwork of his faith. Such extraordinary statements are advanced, — such unexpected laws are developed in nature, — such mysterious facts are given, — that old-accustomed principles of belief are shaken to their centre, and the piety of the Christian trembles at the result. A startling

consequence is at hand. If the facts of Mesmerism be not miraculous, — if they be no otherwise marvellous than as their strangeness makes them so, and if custom will soon reduce this marvellousness to an every-day occurrence, — how do all these positions bear upon the miracles related in Scripture? Are we not lowering their value? Is not the very keystone on which our faith is built, loosened, if not removed? If the course of nature be not suspended by the action of Mesmerism, how can we show that the wonders of old time must not fall back to the same shrunken proportions, and that the truths of Revelation do not totter at their base?

This is no unreal charge wantonly thrust forward for controversial display, and creating the very evil it professes to deprecate; — but the expression of an actual living opinion which is beginning to assume a serious shape and being. It is no longer whispered in the *salons* of science that the tendencies of Mesmerism go to uphold the Deist in his unhappy belief, the proposition is triumphantly advanced in the publications of the infidel; and the Christian himself often feels an anxious misgiving which deters him from a bold investigation of the fact. The position has been strongly stated to me by the two opposite sects. "If," said a friend, "you really have faith in the reality of the wondrous cures of which you make mention, — do you not see the dangerous ground

you are treading. — You cannot stop where you will. If I believe in Mesmerism, I must disbelieve all that I have hitherto held as sacred and divine." "Follow out your convictions," said a gentleman of the other school, "and flinch not at their consequence. The reputed miracles of Scripture were but the result of strong Mesmeric power. Christ only raised the dead by Mesmerism." And thus has it ever been in the history of the world. And thus has every new discovery been dreaded or vaunted, according to the respective point from which it has been viewed by the friends or adversaries of religion. Thus was it with astronomy, — with chemistry, — with geology, — with phrenology. — The Bible speaks of the rising of the sun; but Copernicus and Galileo were charged with upsetting the Bible, for they proved that the sun was the centre of its system, and consequently did not rise to gladden the earth. The theory of another hemisphere was heretical for a season, and Columbus was in his turn taxed with weakening the validity of Scripture. Cuvier, in like manner, was treated as the antagonist of Moses: and Gall was accused of leading his followers to a belief in the coarsest materialism. And thus it went on for a season. Men trembled at the truth; and the truth itself lay hid behind the mists of a partial knowledge and discovery. Soon, however, a brighter state of things came on. Profounder researches dis-

pelled the anxiety of the timid. Faith and science were not found incompatible. Revelation and matter had but one and the same divine original. The first of philosophers were among the humblest of Christians; and the most aspiring student of the laws of nature has not blushed to bow in lowliest adoration before the Word of Life. And thus will it be with Mesmerism. The discovery of this mighty power will form no exception to the other departments of science. He, who spake as never man spake, wrought also as man has never been able to imitate: and while the Scriptural reader must feel in his heart an internal evidence of the truth of that book on which he places all his hopes, with the conviction that doctrines so pure, — so lovely, could proceed from nothing short of a heavenly source, even so will he perceive in the miracles of his blessed Lord an inseparable pledge of the divinity of His mission, for that no one could do such things as Christ did, except God were with him!

What, then, it is asked, is the resemblance that exists between the miracles of the Saviour and the wonders of Mesmerism? We answer confidently, *none whatever*. An impassable gulf divides them. Both, indeed, proceed from the same Eternal Being; but the Mesmeric phenomena are nothing else than the product of a simple power in nature; while the marvels of Scripture arose from an interruption of those

laws by which the government of the universe has been administered from creation: and this position, with God's grace, I proceed to prove.

I commence with a consideration of those miracles, to which the wildest dreams of the most enthusiastic Mesmeriser pretend not to have made approach. And here, it will be observed, we assume that the reader is a Christian, — that he believes that the facts recorded in the Gospels did take place and are true, and that his only question is, how far the *Divine origin* of those facts is shaken by what has occurred in these latter days. Into the matter of evidence, therefore, we do not enter. Paley's incomparable work has exhausted the subject, and refuted every doubt. To Paley, therefore, we refer the wavering heart. But our present inquiry is, whether there be any *counter-claims* on our attention, from facts evincing equal power, — and supported by evidence equally conclusive.*

The "beginning of miracles, with which Jesus manifested forth his glory," was the *change* of *water* into *wine*. He did not command the six stone water-pots to be first emptied of the water and then replenished them with wine; — but he ordered the empty vessels to be previously filled

* Those who are indisposed for the study of Paley's longer work, will find an admirable compendium of the *whole* subject in a small volume, called "Lectures on the Evidence from Miracles," by the Rev. R. C. Coxe, the present learned and excellent Vicar of Newcastle. (Rivingtons.)

with water; and from these vessels, which were "filled up to the brim," the servants were instructed to draw forth, and bear to the governor of the feast; and a quantity of water, being supposed, upon the smallest computation, to be above a hogshead, was discovered by the guests to be converted into wine. — Mesmerism could have no agency here. The fact admits of no other explanation than that of being a miraculous and supernatural work.

We next come to the miraculous draught of fishes. This occurred twice: once at the commencement of Christ's ministry, and once after his resurrection. Twice had the fishermen been toiling all the night, and *caught nothing*. At the command of Jesus, they let down their nets, and inclose the first time so extraordinary a draught, that their nets brake, and their boats were beginning to sink. On the second occasion, they were hardly able to draw the net to land for the multitude and size of the fishes; and yet it is mentioned by the Evangelist as an additional wonder, that the net was not broken. Now we cannot, perhaps, strictly describe a fact like this as *beyond nature*, for such a thing *might* happen; but it is not *according to nature*. Nothing like it has ever been seen, before or since. It is, therefore, contrary to the order of nature, — contrary to the general laws of nature. And when an event like this, which no natural causes have produced at

any other time, occurred twice in the history of one man, we are justified in saying that it could be no peculiar or fortunate coincidence, — but a preternatural fact, which can be classed under no other head than that of the miraculous.

The next miracle to be noticed is the instant stilling of a tempest on the Lake of Gennesareth, — a tempest so violent that the waves were breaking over the ship. Dr. E. Clarke in his Travels mentions, that when adverse winds, sweeping from the mountains with the force of a hurricane, meet the strong current of the waters, which is formed by the river Jordan passing through the lake, a dangerous sea is at once raised. Now some such a hurricane Christ and his disciples encountered; and he stilled it in a moment; for there was a "*great calm.*" The "raging of the water" and the violence of the winds subsided at once. Now this was clearly miraculous. By a singular accident, the wind might have been suddenly hushed at the very same moment that Jesus spoke, but this fortuitous calm would not also have extended to the waters. Whoever has been to sea, or whoever has witnessed a storm at sea, knows full well that it requires a certain interval of time for the waves to cease to swell after the winds have ceased to blow. It is never a great hurricane in one moment, and a glassy surface in the next. The fishermen unaccustomed to such a transition, "marvelled," as well they might, and

demanded among themselves "what *manner* of man" Christ was. And the only answer is, a Man from God! Where is Mesmerism here?

The feeding of great multitudes on *two occasions* with a few loaves and fishes, surpasses all bounds of exaggeration also. There could be no false perception here. The statement does not admit of the supposition of a fortunate experiment. As Leslie says, that "one small loaf of bread should be so multiplied in the breaking, as not only in appearance and to the eye, but truly and really to satisfy the appetites of a thousand hungry persons, and that the fragments should be much more than the bread was at first," is a fact which can admit of no explanation. And while we do not know the precise point at which the powers of nature terminate, as in the case of Mesmerism, we can declare unhesitatingly, that such a multiplication of food is beyond the reach of a natural cause, and that here we have again a manifest interposition of the power of God.

The walking upon the sea is a plain fact which admits of no explanation. It is a statement in which there could be neither mistake nor exaggeration. The ship was "in the midst of the sea," and he walked to them. He "walked *upon* the sea." The ship was twenty or thirty furlongs distant from the shore, *i. e.* more than three miles, and he walked to them. St. Peter also walked upon the sea to meet him, and, "beginning to

sink," was saved by Jesus catching him by the arm. The miracle is mentioned by three Evangelists, and most fully by St. Matthew. The same word in the original, which is used by St. Mark, in his sixth chapter (verse 47.), for describing Jesus as being "*on* the land," is used by him and St. John, when they speak of him as walking "*on* the sea." No statement in the New Testament will admit of a closer or more critical examination than will this. And what confirms the miraculous character of the action is the fact, that the disciples seem to have been more impressed by this than by any preceding miracle, for they "*worshipped*" him, St. Matthew says, in consequence, and declared that "of a truth he was the Son of God."

"The Transfiguration of the Saviour is a fact, also, which admits of no softening explanation. It happened not at night but in broad day; — not in a corner, — but on the very top of a mountain. The brightness and glory were more than the faculties of the spectators were able to endure. A celestial voice was heard, speaking to Jesus. The disciples were so overpowered with all that took place, that they flung themselves with their faces on the ground, and so remained till the Saviour touched them and bade them rise. And St. Peter expressly refers to the wonders of this day, as a special proof that the Gospel was "no cunningly devised fable."

The drying up of the fig-tree is a fact to which no Mesmeric power makes the most distant approach. Jesus spoke, and the fig-tree withered away instantly from the roots. "How *soon*," said the disciples, "is the tree withered!"

The raising of the dead on three distinct occasions is explained by the modern unbeliever as the revival of a sleeping person out of a trance. The different facts of each case put together contradict the opinion. Jesus meets the dead son of the widow of Nain, humanly speaking by *accident*, as he is carried out on his bier. He at once approaches and bids the young man arise; "and he that was dead sat up, and began to speak." Now, on the supposition that the mother and the numerous friends of this young man (for "much people" were in attendance, and the body was not inclosed in a coffin, but carried openly on a litter, as is the way in the East), on the supposition that all were deceived, and that the young man was only entranced, can we suppose, with any degree of reason, that in the two remaining instances the relations and domestics were also under a delusion? Let us take, then, the case of the ruler's daughter. Jesus is *suddenly* invited by Jairus to his house to heal his child. In the mean time death seizes his victim; and so undeniable are the signs of dissolution, that the family are anxious that Jesus should retire and be no further inconvenienced. "Trouble

not the Master, for she is dead." It would be a singular coincidence if this also were a trance. But Jesus, *before he has even entered the house* or seen the body, pronounces that the maiden shall live and be "made whole." But we have a third instance: the raising of Lazarus. Lazarus had been in his grave four days. When the stone was removed from the cave, and as soon as Jesus spoke, that instant Lazarus came forth bound hand and foot in grave clothes, and his face fastened over with a napkin. The restoration was instantaneous and complete. He did not merely move, and speak, and die again. He did not gradually and with further assistance come to himself; but he whose corpse was supposed to be already in an offensive state of decay, walked forth at once from the tomb, returned home to his family, and lived and was seen alive a long time after. Now upon an examination of the above, this train of questions suggests itself. What probability is there, that *all* the attendants and relatives in these three cases were equally under a deception? Is it meant that all who die are only in a trance; and if not, what reason is there to show that these three persons were exclusively in a trance more than any others? How should Jesus, if only a man, know *before he had even seen them*, that Lazarus and the ruler's daughter were only entranced? Supposing after all that they had been dead, and did not rise forth, would not

the power of Jesus have been proved null and void? The same remark applies to the son of the widow of Nain. Jesus, as a mere man, dared not have risked the chances of a failure, unless it be said that a trance is a more common occurrence than a death. The unbeliever, however, says that these three persons were not really dead, but only in appearance. From their own statement, here then were three of the most curious coincidences, — and all in the course of two years. The mere recurrence of the fact refutes the theory. This is the dilemma: if they were really dead, *none but a divine power could raise them, and that by a miracle;* — if they were only entranced, how could Jesus, if but a mere man, know it? and not knowing it of a certainty, how would he venture on the hazardous experiment of placing his reputation on the issue of such a chance? Never was an hypothesis built on a more untenable position.

We will not enter upon an examination of the question that naturally presents itself in the next place, as to whether the Saviour was himself also in a trance. No one fact is better established in the whole Gospel history, than the re-appearance of Christ after the crucifixion. If that fact be not true, there is an end of human evidence for ever. Was He also, we ask then, in a trance when hanging on the cross, and when laid in the tomb by Joseph of Arimathæa? The question

answers itself: it is too monstrous to need refutation.

Here, then, we have examined in detail a class of miracles in the New Testament, to which the proudest results of the Mesmeric power offer not the most distant resemblance. And let no one say, that this examination was idle, — that it is foreign to the subject, — that we "fight, as one that beateth the air." Nothing is useless, by which the faith of the believer may be strengthened, and the misgivings of the anxious heart be quenched as they arise. The question of Scripture evidence * has within these few years shifted ground. The charge of enthusiasm, of exaggeration, of falsehood is now seldom heard. A new position is adopted by the opponent. The facts recorded in the Gospels are at once admitted, — their narrators are allowed to be truthful intelligent men, — but the wonders they relate are referred to the operation of an *adequate natural cause*, — a cause of which the spectators had not then the remotest suspicion, but which is amply sufficient to explain their existence and effect. This uatural cause, they say, is Mesmerism. The facts are old, but the principle is newly discovered. And knowing myself that Mesmerism

* "Christian Truth," says Dr. Hawkins, the present learned Provost of Oriel College, when speaking of the examination of the Christian Evidences, — "is a subject *ever new*, and of the deepest interest to each individual man in each successive generation." — *Bampton Lectures*, p. 225.

is a living reality, — knowing that its powers reach to an unsuspected extent, — knowing that the faith of many has been disturbed by this discovery, I have thought it essential to analyse the question closely, and place the subject in its true colours. If I could not say how far Mesmerism *does go*, I have at least shown how far it *does not go*. The inquiry has commenced by an examination of facts, to which no approximation, even in the faintest degree, has ever been made by the Mesmeric power. If the matter stopped here, sufficient would have been said to prove the Divine Mission of the Lord Jesus, and to show that He was a teacher sent from God. But we now proceed to an investigation into those miracles of a curative character, to which a greater resemblance with this new power is supposed to exist.

And here it is at once asserted, that the Mesmeric cures are something very extraordinary. For the convenience of the present argument, we do not fall back from that position. They have often been most wonderful. The treatment has often and often been efficacious, where no other remedy could succeed. This is admitted in the fullest and most unequivocal manner. Independent, moreover, of the general power, which is common in a degree to most men, certain persons have been physically gifted with a peculiar virtue of a very unusual character. A denial of

the fact cannot alter it. The evidence on this point is too authentic to be questioned. Valentine Greatrakes, an Irish gentleman who lived in the seventeenth century,—De Loutherbourgh the well-known painter, Gassner a Roman Catholic priest in Suabia, an English gardener named Levret, and several other parties could all be mentioned, whose powers of cure by manipulation and magnetic action were something very peculiar. Their patients were most numerous. All sorts of diseases were relieved by them. The then Bishop of Derry, speaking of Greatrakes, says, "There is something *in the power more than ordinary.*" Still with the very largest allowance for the extent and variety of the effects, they all fall very far short of being miraculous;—they all fall very far short of the Gospel wonders. "The cure often did not succeed, but by reiterated touches; the patients often relapsed; he failed frequently; he can do nothing where there is any decay in nature, and many distempers are not at all obedient to his touch." This was said of Greatrakes; and the same applies to every other Mesmerist of whom I have ever heard. The most successful practitioner has never laid claim to the possession of an infallible and universal power. He has never pledged himself beforehand, in every possible case to produce a cure. If he have succeeded in ninety-nine cases, he has failed in the hundredth.

If he have procured a lasting benefit in many patients, the relief is often but temporary in others. Here, then, in the *first place,* is the wide and immeasurable interval that separates the wonders of the Mesmeriser from the marvels of the Redeemer of Israel. No one ever sought His face in vain. No one ever went unto Him, and was cast out unrelieved. The word of promise that went forth from His lips, never returned unto Him void. His language was decisive and with authority; His touch was in its effect certain, foreknown, invariable; His sanative power extended to every pain, — to every complication of disease. Nothing can be more decisive than the testimony of Scripture on this point. To use Paley's happy expression, there was nothing *tentative* or experimental in the manner. "There is nothing in the Gospel narrative," says he, "which can allow us to believe, that Christ attempted cures in many instances, and succeeded in a few; or that he ever made the attempt in vain." And the Gospel history confirms this position. "He healed *all* that were sick." (Matt. c. viii. v. 16.) St. Luke says that "All they that had *any* sick with divers diseases brought them unto him: and he laid his hands *on every one* of them and *healed* them." (c. iv. v. 40.). St. Matthew again says that "He went about *all* Galilee, — healing *all manner* of sickness and *all manner* of disease among the people."

"And they brought unto him *all sick* people, that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were lunatic and those that had the palsy, and he *healed them.*" (c. iv. vv. 23, 24.). Again we read, that "*great multitudes* came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and *many others*, and cast them down at Jesus' feet, and he *healed them.*" (Matt. c. xv. v. 30.). There was no exception that we read of, in any instance. Here, then, in the first place is one distinguishing characteristic of the Christian cures, the *universality* of the success, wherever the attempt was made.

We now come, in the next place, to a *second* and most material distinction, the *class of cures* effected by either party. In Mesmerism, the diseases subdued have been of a very remarkable character; tic-douloureux, fearful epileptic fits, brain fever, derangement, deafness, weakness in the eyes, neuralgic pains of all kinds, loss of voice, paralysis, fevers, and a variety of other disorders; cures have been effected where all other means have failed; still all these fall immeasurably short of the miraculous effects recorded in Scripture. — Cures of a far higher order are there related; cures, where the limbs or members had been organically injured, — cures where the injury had dated from the birth of the party. And here to mark the difference more strongly, it is necessary to introduce a *third* and even greater distinction,

viz., the period of time in which the benefit was produced. In Mesmerism the relief has been often most rapid; in a quarter of an hour pain has begun to give way, and has been even expelled; in a first sitting a disorder has been removed; yet, even rapid as has been the therapeutic power of the Mesmeriser, it is idle to compare it to the instantaneous, — to the magical change that followed on the touch and the voice of the Saviour. Christ "spake the word," and quicker than thought a complete revolution took place in the brain, in the blood, or in the structure of the sufferer. What was wanting, was supplied; what was weakened, was renewed; what was broken, was made whole; and that, too, in an instant of time. In the twinkling of an eye, a mass of diseased and putrefying sores became "as the flesh of a little child," in the bloom of health. The combination is very noticeable, and marks the miraculous character. In Mesmerism I have heard of more than one instance, where a rheumatism of many years standing has been cured at the first *séance*, as soon as the magnetic medium had passed into the patient's system; perhaps even greater and more expeditious effects may be named: still, let them be compared to the miracles of the New Testament in regard to the class of diseases and the instantaneous character of the cure, and what resemblance is there?

Peter's wife's mother is confined to her bed

with a *fever;* Christ takes her by the hand; the fever *immediately* leaves her; no lassitude, the usual consequence of feverish action, remains; for she arises and ministers to them at their meat.

Eleven specific cases of a cure of leprosy are recorded. The leprosy is a disease beyond all description fearful; by some it is thought incurable. The skin and flesh are one mass of corruption. To effect a cure, therefore, a change must take place in the whole current of the blood. In the first cure related, the leprosy "*immediately* departed." In the cases of the other ten lepers, they were all cured, at once on their quitting Jesus, and in their way to the priests.

Many important cures of paralysis are mentioned. One in particular is specified, where the sufferer was so completely deprived of the use of his limbs as to be carried by four men. He is cured *instantly* that Jesus speaks, and *walks* off, carrying his bed.

A cripple, who had been suffering from his infirmity and loss of limbs for thirty-eight years,—and a poor woman, who had been bent double for eighteen years, are both cured at once. The latter "was *immediately* made straight." The former was "*immediately* made whole, and took up his bed and walked."

What can be a more hopeless state, than a dry withered limb? Nature seems dead in the part. All power is gone. A man with a withered hand

comes to Christ: he is ordered to stretch it out, and "it is restored whole, *as the other.*"

Mesmerism has been of signal service in deafness, in blindness, and where the voice has been injured; but the benefit has been obtained by degrees; and in no instance has a cure been produced where the privation has arisen from a structural defect, commencing with the birth. Several cases are mentioned in Scripture of cures of blindness, — of blindness "from birth," — of deafness and dumbness united from birth, — of deafness with impediment in the speech, — and so on, where the cure was *instantaneous,* and following the touch. In one case of blindness, the cure was effected more gradually; still it was cured,— and half an hour, or an hour at the most, was the time occupied from the sufferer's first interview with Jesus, before his eyes were "restored and that he saw every man clearly." To compare any of the benefits procured by Mesmerism, with those marvellous cures of blindness and deafness, would be an absurdity, which none but those who have not studied them closely, would dream of committing.

Among other instantaneous cures, we may mention that of a woman with an issue of blood of twelve years' duration, who came behind, and without the (humanly speaking) knowledge of Jesus, touched his garment, and was cured *directly;* that of a boy with violent epileptic fits;

and that of the servant whose ear was cut off, the wound of which was at once healed by the touch of Jesus.

It may be as well to add, that in the xvth of Matthew, verse 30., where the Evangelist speaks of the "lame and maimed" being brought to Jesus, and of the "lame walking," and the "maimed being made whole," some of the best commentators are of opinion, that the word which in our translation is rendered "maimed," signifies those who had not merely lost the use of their limbs, as the lame,—but *even the limbs themselves;* and that those deficient limbs were replaced, and the sufferers "made whole." Be this as it may, here is a succession of cures, standing out in pre-eminent majesty, both in the nature of the disease and the suddenness of the relief, — far — far above any that the annals of Magnetism can adduce, with a line of demarcation between them so broad and insuperable, that the most trembling Christian need not dread the faintest approximation.

A *fourth* distinguishing mark, attendant upon the cures related in the Gospel, is the permanency of their effect. There is no reason to suspect from the slightest phrase that drops from any of the New Testament writers, nor from any charge that was advanced by the unbeliever, that the benefit was not as lasting as it was complete. No one can assert the same of all our Mesmeric cures.

Many are indeed permanent; but with a large number the action requires to be renewed at intervals, especially in some diseases that are of a chronic kind.

Still the unbeliever replies, that Christ performed all his cures by the "*touch.*" "They brought unto him those that were sick with divers diseases, and he *laid his hands* on every one of them and healed them." It was the Mesmeric "touch" they assert. Though there was no manipulating process adopted, still the Mesmeric power was possessed by him to such an unusual and excessive degree, that the mere touch was sufficient. That a virtue accompanied the touch of the Saviour is admitted. It is, in fact, the very thing we assert. The question is whether that touch was divine or human, — whether the touch of any other human being, not recorded in Scripture, ever wrought out the same effects? Supposing, even as some think, that the touch was Mesmeric, only exerted to a supernatural degree, the result would not be less of a miracle. If God brings out a latent power in nature, and exercises it to an extent of which man is incapable, though the virtue itself be part of nature's forces, still its employment to this extreme degree would be an interference with our physical laws, and therefore strictly præternatural. This is the distinction between an energy that is ordinary, or extra-ordinary. The former may be very wonderful, — but the latter is miraculous.

And certainly, in confirmation of this view, it must be said that God works by means. To judge from analogy, He does not *create* a fresh power, where *sufficient* in nature already exists. When the Red Sea was divided by miracle, though dry land could have been produced at once by the simple word of his power, He rather caused the waters to go back by the effect of a strong east wind, which He called into unusual action for the occasion. And thus it *may* be with Mesmerism: Christ *may* have exercised a latent Mesmeric power to an extra and miraculous extent. For instance, when the poor woman with an issue of blood touched him secretly, and Jesus said that he "perceived that *virtue* was gone out of him," He *may* have meant that a supernatural portion of that magnetic virtue, which is imparted in a greater or less degree to every human being, had escaped from Him and caused the benefit. I mention this in deference to the views of others, rather than as expressing my own opinion. In changing water into wine, or in multiplying five loaves to feed five thousand, there would appear a species of divine power exerted, having no connection whatever with this quality of "touch." His touch, therefore, may not have been meant for a medium of communication. It may simply have been an external action, identifying himself with the cure and attracting the attention of the party more especially towards him. Moreover, Jesus did *not*

always touch the sick. In the cure of the sick of the palsy, of the cripple, of the withered hand, of the boy with epileptic fits, no mention is made of the "laying on of hands." And this brings us to a *fifth* and very remarkable distinction, the cure of three sick persons immediately and *at a distance*, whither this assumed Mesmeric virtue could not possibly, except by miracle, extend. Nothing in the annals of Mesmerism has a parallel to this. I certainly know of some instances, where a strong sanative and soothing power has been communicated at a distance by the transmission of a highly Mesmerised material, and from which the benefit has also been at present permanent. But this curative effect was the work of weeks, of months, — of long incessant application. Let us, on the other hand, turn to the three cases recorded in Scripture. The first was the cure of a nobleman's son, who was dying of a *fever*, at the distance of more than twenty miles. The disease left him at the very hour in which Jesus said "Thy son liveth." The second is the cure of the Centurion's servant, who was sick of a palsy and "ready to die," who "was healed in the self-same hour that Jesus spoke," — without his passing under the roof. The third was the recovery of the daughter of the woman of Canaan, at once and at a distance by the mere word and command of Jesus. Whatever the sickness was, whether derangement or epileptic fits, it matters not; the fact was, she

was cured, and cured without touch or even approximation of the Saviour.

Here then are five characteristics, which especially distinguish the curative miracles of Christ, and separate them from any resemblance to even the highest order of Mesmeric power.

1. The cure was universal.
2. The diseases were more desperate, and in some cases organic.
3. The cure was instantaneous.
4. The cure was permanent.
5. The cure was occasionally performed at a distance.

One other quality may be mentioned: the power was transmissive. The Apostles were invested with the same virtue to an equal degree. This can in no wise be said of those who possessed that peculiar healing power that we before alluded to. This cannot be said of Gassner, of Greatrakes, of De Loutherbourgh, or of others. The power died with them. It was not imparted to followers or friends. Not so in the Christian dispensation: the Disciples were empowered equally "to lay hands on the sick," and the promise was, "and they shall recover." We read of "many wonders and signs being done by the Apostles." We read of a "*multitude* out of the cities round about Jerusalem bringing sick folks to the Apostles, and *they were healed every one!*" More especially we are told of the cure by Peter and John of the im-

potent man in the temple, that was lame from his birth, whose ankle-bones and feet received strength *immediately:* of the cripple at Lystra, "who had never walked" from his birth, and also stood up at once and leaped, at the mere word of St. Paul; and of the father of Publius, who lay sick of a fever and was healed by the same Apostle. Other wonders might be named; but this is sufficient to enable us to ask this question, If Christ only wrought his cures by the exercise of the same natural power, that Gassner and others employed, why was he able to transmit the same virtue to his followers, while with Gassner and Greatrakes no successor appeared?

"But," says the anxious inquirer, "you have at present made no allusion to the most wondrous parts of Mesmerism. *Clairvoyance*, internal vision, the predictive faculty, are all passed over; and these are the phenomena that more than any partake of the miraculous character."

Of the predictive faculty there is some difficulty in speaking. Many remarkable facts have certainly been stated, on the most respectable authority; and he would be a bold and hasty man, who should presume to reject them, without having fully certified himself as to the defect in their evidence. But strange as some of these predictions appear, to place them in the same category with the prophetic writings of the Old Testament, — to compare them with the fulfilment of facts

which had been predicted hundreds of years before, is preposterous. They somewhat approach the character of the stories of *second-sight* among the Scotch. It would be difficult to discredit *all* the anecdotes that are related under that head; and many other singular predictions have occurred in the history of the human mind, to which different medical and metaphysical works have referred. How far, in certain states of diseases, the mind becomes more spiritual and acquires a peculiar character of exaltation and of subtle judgment, so as to decide more clearly as to the *probability* of an event, I leave to physiologists to determine. Such, at any rate, is my own opinion. Still all this, even at the best, is widely different from the prophetic character. The anticipation of an event, a few weeks previously, is very remote from a prediction of several centuries; and in fact, this sort of foresight bears no more relation to ancient prophecy, than do the wonderful cures of the Mesmeriser to the miraculous effects recorded in the Gospel.

Of clairvoyance, or the faculty of seeing through opaque bodies, of reading without the use of the eyes, and so forth, wonderful as these facts appear at first, and utterly discredited as they are by many who believe in the other marvels of Mesmerism, it is not needful to say so much as might be expected, for two reasons.

First, they bear no resemblance whatsoever to

any thing recorded in Scripture. Nothing of the kind is mentioned in the Gospel history as one of its miracles. Christ never appealed to any such fact, as a proof of his divine legation.

But, secondly, however wonderful or incredible they may appear,— there is not one single fact of this nature, occurring in the Mesmeric state,— but the same or a similar fact has been found to exist, spontaneously, in the condition of natural somnambulism. Those who will study the subject, will see this assertion unequivocally proved. I have given this statement before. In certain stages of extreme or peculiar disease, nature has found a vent, by throwing the patient into an abnormal condition. In this condition very singular phenomena have appeared. Very many cases * could be cited of clairvoyance in that particular state.— In these cases, Mesmerism was unknown to the parties, or was not applied artificially. These phenomena were the result of hysteria or natural Mesmerism. At any rate, they appeared spontaneously and in a state of disease; and as such they relieve the Mesmeric wonders of the character of the supernatural, and bring them down to the level of ordinary occurrences; and any comparison, therefore, between the latter and the miracles of Scripture, would be misplaced and superfluous.

* See Appendix.

I trust that the anxious and the scrupulous may now feel more assured on this important subject; and perceive the wide distinction that exists in the matter. The question is capable of a much more detailed analysis, and of receiving a fuller and more conclusive proof. But enough,—and perhaps more than enough has been stated;—much too that is wearisome, much that is old,—much that is self-evident. But I seek not to please a sect, or give knowledge to the well-instructed. This little work is for the use of the ignorant or the timid; and while I am anxious by its publication to "do good unto all men;" I more especially write for the "household of faith." Many amiable and virtuous minds have been deterred from giving Mesmerism that candid trial which its importance deserves, from no other feeling than a silent unuttered fear as to its bearing on Revelation. To say that such a feeling is not right,—that a love of truth ought to be predominant at all hazards, is easy of utterance, and perhaps correct in reality. Still it is a feeling that deserves respect. And it is to meet this feeling, and remove these scruples, that the materials of this Chapter have been put together. How far they may be successful time will show. That there was a necessity for the attempt, there cannot be a question. And my hope is, that many a perplexed and doubting heart, whose faith had been staggered for a little

season at the presumed mysteriousness of our new science, may be led to a more accurate understanding of its relative merits;—and comparing natural things with things that are really superhuman, may see more clearly the transcendent superiority of all that has been related of Christ, beyond any antagonistic claims affecting equal power; — and, with a belief more and more strengthened by a diligent and prayerful investigation of the truth, may be enabled in all sincerity with Nathaniel to exclaim, "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God! Thou art the King of Israel!"

CHAP. VII.

MARVELS AND LYING WONDERS. — EXPLANATION OF FANCIED MIRACLES. — ECSTATIC DREAMERS AND PROPHETESSES. — MODERN MIRACLES AMONG WESLEYANS AND ROMAN CATHOLICS TESTED BY WHAT OCCURRED IN A FRIEND'S HOUSE. — LORD SHREWSBURY AND THE TYROLESE. — "TRANSFER OF THOUGHT." — MESMERIC ACTION CONTAGIOUS. — CONCLUSION.

But though Mesmerism does not shake, in the most distant degree, the belief of the intelligent Christian in the reality of Scripture miracles, — it furnishes the Philosopher with a useful clue towards the understanding of much that has hitherto been mysterious. In the history of man, many facts have been recorded, of which a clear explanation has yet been wanting. In all ages of the world, we have had a succession of marvels, at which the ignorant have been alarmed, the wise have been staggered, and the superstitious excited. False prophets, pretended miracles, wonder-working saints, have, from time to time, arisen, disturbing and deceiving the very elect. Though heathenism and idolatry have had their prodigies in abundance, to the authority of which their votaries have appealed in confirmation of their creed, the Church of Christ has been more especially rife with pretensions of the same order.

The charge of trick and delusion on these occasions has been advanced in every generation;—sometimes correctly,—not unfrequently, however, with inconsiderate haste. The unbeliever has detected much that was false;—the scientific have traced much to the effect of imagination; and so the inconsequential conclusion has been adopted through convenience, that imposture was at the foundation of all the rest. And yet to those who had impartially examined the various recorded statements, this summary decision was not always satisfactory. A miracle, or miraculous train of incidents, is, for example, announced. After a time an inquiry is pursued. The sceptic and the unprejudiced take the question up. A mass of falsehood and folly is discovered; and yet, after a large deduction on that head, there often "remained a residuum of something strange and perplexing" to the most philosophic. Of course, all this was, in the end, placed to the account of "imagination," and so the question was disposed of for a season;—but the real analysis of the difficulty was incomplete and partial.

Most divisions of the Church have, in their turn, appealed to their own especial marvel. A miracle has not been wanting to prove the most opposite doctrines. Wherever there has been the coarsest ignorance, there has generally been the greatest prodigy: and the number of these "lying wonders" has been in proportion, not so much to

the quality of the faith, as to the enthusiasm of the party, and the multitude and character of the respective followers. As Bacon says, in his Advancement of Learning, "This facility of credit, and accepting or admitting things weakly authorized or warranted, hath too easily registered reports and narrations of miracles wrought by martyrs, hermits, and other holy men, which, though they had a passage for a time by the ignorance of the people, the superstitious simplicity of some, and the politic toleration of others,—yet, after a period, when the mist began to clear up, they grew to be esteemed but as old wives' fables, impostures of the clergy, and illusions of spirits, to the great scandal and detriment of religion."

One point, however, is deserving of notice. Whatever accumulation of falsehood has been super-added in the progress, the original fact, from which the pretended miracle has taken its rise, has in general been a genuine and undoubted occurrence, for which a natural or secondary cause may be discovered. Most corrupt as is human nature, this statement may be adopted with but occasional exceptions. Nor is it difficult to follow out a transaction of the kind, till it altogether assumes the colour of complete imposture. A singular fact occurs in a secluded spot, and amongst an ignorant population. It is soon spoken of as supernatural. The first to visit and inquire into the details is the spiritual pastor of the flock. He

hears much that is incomprehensible to him. But little removed in intelligence above his own superstitious congregation, he adopts their theory, and sees with their eyes. The fact becomes a miracle with him. God has visited his people; and as the especial minister of God he takes the management of the case under his peculiar care. Nothing has thus far occurred but what is fair and natural. Soon, however, a temptation assails him; for the admiration of the populace begins to flag; the wonder is ceasing to be wonderful. The good man fears that the salutary check upon sin and immorality, which the suddenness of the marvel had effected in his neighbourhood, is losing its charm. A little excitement is necessary: a small additional wonder, therefore, is ingeniously brought out. The success is complete: the credit of the miracle resumes its hold; the power of religion takes deeper root: and thus the supposed goodness of the object, and the real benefits of the deception, warp his judgment and lead him on. The same round, however, must again be shortly run. And thus, step by step, the pious fraud grows beneath his hand; unintentional deceptions are added in virtue's spite; the man himself has become what "he cannot change, than what he chooses;"—and at last the original wonder has swelled into a monstrous amount of wickedness and imposture; and religion and the cause of truth are periled by the detection.

Now, for many of these marvellous occurrences, Mesmerism can afford a natural explanation. From my own experience, I can state that very many facts, which have been accepted as miraculous, and secured the wonder of a superstitious multitude, have been but the transcript of the same class of incidents as have occurred within the walls of my own house. Natural Somnambulism, and Mesmerism artificially induced (for they are both but different phases of the same condition), will explain many points of the "supernatural" which were previously inexplicable to the inquirer. Nor is it necessary, on all occasions, to assume that any additional prodigies have been appended to the first wonder. Oftentimes the whole transaction has seemed, on Mesmeric principles, nothing but a probable and natural chain of facts: good faith and honesty of purpose have prevailed throughout;—the original marvel remained as it began; and a charge of imposition would be wanton and unphilosophical.

More often, however, the temptation to deceive has been too successful with sinful man. His unconquerable love of spiritual power has acted fatally on the evil propensity within. And where this power could be maintained by the encouragement, or connivance,—or practice of deceit, the Old Adam has too generally surrendered to the seduction. This is the fact, with all creeds and all religionists. It is monstrous to make this an

exclusive charge against one particular Church. That a greater variety of pious frauds has been detected among the priesthood of the Romish church is referable to the fact, that their sway has been most predominant during the darkest ages of Christianity. As Archbishop Whateley says in one of the most useful of his works, "The Origin of Romish Errors," — "This tendency to fraudulent means is not peculiar to any sect, age, or country — it is the spontaneous growth of the corrupt soil of man's heart."

In illustration of the above, a fact can be stated on the best authority. I received it from a lady, whose name I am not at liberty to mention, — but whose position in society and in the literary world is a guarantee for the correctness of the story. She received it from a sister of the patient, and was herself well acquainted with the names and residence of the parties. An invalid had for seven years lost the use of his legs, it is believed, by rheumatism. A Wesleyan minister in the neighbourhood, who had discovered in himself the power of relieving pain by the Mesmeric process, long however before Mesmerism had become generally known, called upon the sufferer, — offered to do all he could to heal him, and said that "he hoped to be as useful to him as the Prophet Elisha." The man, of course, was but too willing to place hime are very beauti. And after a succession of witness; — still they all warmth came

on, followed by a complete restoration of the limbs. In short, the sufferer was wonderfully cured. The immediate cause, we now know, was Mesmerism; for such results are not uncommon; but the thing was inscrutable to all around, and was deemed miraculous by the patient and many of his friends. The Wesleyan minister was regarded by the ignorant populace as a prophet, or, as Bacon expresses it, a "holy man," in consequence; and as his spiritual influence was mightily increased by the transaction, our good preacher winked at the delusion,—but in reality was more of a deceiver than many a calumniated monk in the church of Rome.

But it is on that class of strange appearances, which has received the name of the *Devotional Ecstasis*, that Mesmerism throws an especial light. In all ages, heathen and Christian, a peculiar species of physiological effect has been observed, from time to time, to present itself in young and sickly females,—which has assumed the character of the miraculous or the divine. Sibyls, prophetesses, inspired priestesses, ecstatic dreamers, magical maids, devout nuns, entranced females, have all followed in succession, and received their particular appellation from the accident of the country or religion that claimed them, and of which they became the boast. All these female [illegible] fact, with all [illegible] been regarded as [illegible] it is monstrous to make while their

symptoms, language, attitude, and dreams have all partaken of one uniform character, the doctrines they have upheld, have been as opposite as the poles. *Disease was the secret of the whole matter.* I do not believe, that one single instance of this class of ancient or modern miracles can be adduced, in which the party had not been originally, and often for a long time, in a most unhealthy condition. Let this fact be followed out, and it will be found correct. In this diseased state, nature often relieves itself by throwing the patient into an hysteric and sleeping state. This somnambulistic condition is nothing else than Mesmerism spontaneously produced, — as the symptoms and phenomena clearly indicate. They are but one and the same; with this difference, that in artificial Mesmerism, a sympathy with the Mesmeriser is superadded, and a curative action obtained. I do not mean, that these peculiar phenomena occur in every case of Mesmerism; on the contrary, they are very rare: but when they do take place, they are so precisely similar in their character and affection to what occurs in common somnambulism, that no material difference exists between them. Of course, as in the natural ecstasis, they are not all equally marked: some are stronger in one point than in another; some are of a very short duration; — some are very beautiful — some are very painful to witness; — still they all belong to one

family; and whether resulting from a natural or artificial action, may universally be traced to the working of disease. The very same phenomena, which I have myself witnessed in the case of Anne Vials, and which have occurred with her over and over again, have been brought forward as proofs of the miraculous nature of several appearances in different entranced females. Dr. Elliotson, in the fourth number of the "Zoist," mentions a similar case in one of his patients, where a beautiful ecstatic fit of holy rapture was brought on in the Mesmeric trance, and which amongst an ignorant people might have been used for any superstitious purpose. I shall refer presently to a third and different case, where, in the magnetic sleep, the patient is invested with an apparently prophetic character, — and a species of divine knowledge seems to be conferred upon her. In all these cases, natural or artificially induced, there is almost always, during the period of the paroxysm, a very great exaltation of the intellectual faculties, an unusual clearness of mind, — a high tone of moral feeling, — a spirituality not only in appearance but in language, and occasionally that peculiar power of foreseeing the *probable* result of certain circumstances then in action, which when the effect corresponds with the expectation, assumes the semblance of the prophetic. In fact, as has been truly observed, the crisis is so strange, and the characteristic phenomena so

remarkable, that "the same individual, when awake and when somnambulist, appears like two entirely different persons." It is not, therefore, at all to be wondered at, that a young and ignorant girl, when thrown by disease into this devotional ecstasis, — at one moment looking up with heavenly smiles and clasping her hands together as if praying, — at another uttering the most strange and mysterious opinions, with a degree of knowledge, and freedom, and decision, of which she is perfectly incapable when awake, should be regarded by the uneducated, as a supernatural being. And when certain phenomena, such as an absence of pain, lengthened sleep, vision of persons or things with the eyes closed, should be superadded to these other appearances, it is perhaps to be expected that some such an opinion should possess the minds even of the better informed. Deceived themselves by the incomprehensible character of the sleeper's condition, they end in deceiving others. And thus a diseased habit of body, which a larger acquaintance with physiology can now readily explain, became accredited as a miracle, or denounced as Satanic, according to the accidental creed of the parties interested in the interpretation.*

* The sceptic takes a different line. Hume, in his famous essay, rejects all such statements as "impossible." Speaking of the cures performed at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, he says: "What have we to oppose to such a cloud of witnesses but the absolute impossibility or miraculous nature of the events which

Without going back, therefore, to the older days of Greece or Rome, we may procure many an example out of the annals of the Church. Take Hume's "History of the Holy Maid of Kent," in the reign of Henry the Eighth. "Elizabeth Barton had been subject to hysterical fits, which threw her body into unusual convulsions; and having procured an equal disorder in her mind, made her utter strange sayings, which, as *she was scarcely conscious of them during the time*, had soon after *entirely escaped her memory*. The silly people in the neighbourhood were struck with these appearances, which they imagined to be *supernatural*." The vicar of the parish began to "watch her in her trances, and note down her sayings." Knavery soon followed the first delusion. The maid was taught to assume a more extraordinary language, and to counterfeit stranger trances under the dictation of her spiritual director. "Miracles were daily *added* to increase the wonder; and the pulpit everywhere resounded with accounts of the sanctity and inspiration of the new prophetess." She was afterwards apprehended, the forgery of her miracles was detected, and the public was undeceived.

Now it is clear from the attendant circumstances that this was a case of natural Mesmerism.

they relate? and this, surely, in the eyes of all reasonable people will alone be regarded as a sufficient refutation." The modern physiologist knows, however, the possibility of far more wondrous facts.

The poor girl had been subject to hysterical fits, the effect of disease. In these fits she fell into a deep trance or sleep: in this sleep the usual exaltation of mind came on;—she "uttered strange sayings," of which strange sayings, when she awoke, she was quite unconscious. This common occurrence in the Mesmeric state the world deemed "supernatural;" and a designing priesthood "persuaded the people and the maid herself that her ravings were inspirations of the Holy Ghost."

A learned writer in the "Church of England Quarterly Review," for April, 1843, in an article on this subject, has collected the names of several ecstatic nuns and females of the church of Rome. The reviewer mentions some cases in which the imposture was clear, and admitted afterwards by the parties: and hence he infers that all the other instances were "sheer imposture," in like manner. Imposition, however, will not explain all the facts. It explains much that was added on in the progress of the work, after the priests had found the trances profitable; but that the original state of many a "prophetess," which led to the delusion, was a natural and diseased action none can doubt, who have given to the subject of Mesmerism a philosophical study.

Our next instance shall be drawn from the pages of Protestant History. When Louis the Fourteenth revoked the Edict of Nantes, and withdrew the protection of the state from the re-

formed Church, the most extraordinary excitement was stirred up in the south of France, in the mountainous district called the Cevennes. The whole population went mad with religious zeal. They preached,—they prophesied,—they quaked;—in short, the most marvellous state of things came on,—so that to the eye of the ardent Protestant a divine revelation and assistance appeared vouchsafed to the cause.

In the midst of the general excitement, one especial case of miraculous illumination was singled out. Isabeau Vincent, a young girl, aged seventeen, was constantly falling into a state of deep sleep, from which it was at times impossible to arouse her. They called to her with a loud voice,—they pushed her,—they pinched her,—they pricked her till they drew blood,—they burned her,—but nothing awoke her. She was soon regarded by her Protestant neighbours as a prophetess. For in her sleep she sang Psalms, and chanted long hymns, and made admirable prayers, and recited texts of Scripture,—which she expounded, and from which she formed her prophetic declarations. When she awoke, *she remembered nothing of what she had said or prophesied during the ecstasis.* And one other remarkable point in her condition was,—that she rarely awoke of herself,—but required assistance, and told those about her to awaken her.*

* "Ces extases ne paraissaient que comme un profond sommeil, duquel il était impossible de la tirer. On l'appelait à haute voix,

We have another remarkable prophetess in the reformed church, Christian Poniatova, of Bohemia. Her convulsions, trances, and visions took place in 1627, at the time that a sharp persecution was set on foot against the Protestant part of the Bohemian community. Her visions had reference to the prosperity and fortunes of the reformed church. Her sleep was most profound; during which she fell into an ecstasis. She then predicted several events; and she seems to have had in that state a certain species of *prévision*, such as Mesmerised patients occasionally possess. Her Protestant partizans regarded the whole as a miracle, and the girl as divinely inspired. But here is the noticeable point: when she recovered her health, the *supernatural* disappeared. The malady and the miracle went away together. She afterwards married, and was no longer regarded as a prophetess.*

Mr. Colquhoun, in the "Isis Revelata," gives us another case that occurred in Brazil, where a girl, named Sister Germaine, in 1808, was attacked by an hysterical affection, accompanied by serious ill health: — "She was in such a state, that she was no longer able to rise from her bed, and subsisted upon a regimen which could scarcely have

on la poussait, on la pinçait, on la piquait jusqu'au sang, on la brûlait, rien ne la réveillait." — BERTRAND. *T. du Somnambulisme*, p. 368.

* Bertrand, Traité du Somnambulisme.

supported the life of a new-born infant." And now comes the miraculous part. The poor invalid fell into a deep trance: her arms grew stiff, and were extended in the form of a cross, and in this position remained for hours. Other circumstances, usual in this sort of ecstasis, took place; the whole was declared to be a miracle. Sister Germaine was regarded as a saint; and the concourse of pilgrims to visit her was immense. And now let us notice the close connection between natural and mesmeric somnambulism. The priest stated, that "in the midst of the most fearful convulsions, it was always sufficient for him to *touch the patient* to restore her to perfect tranquillity. During her periodical ecstasies, when her limbs were so stiff that it would have been *easier to break than bend them*, her confessor, according to his own account, had only to touch her arm, in order to give it whatever position he thought proper." Every Mesmeriser who has had a patient in a rigid or cataleptic state can understand and believe the above narrative.

We will now come to later days — to certain modern miracles among the Wesleyans and Roman Catholics, which have excited considerable interest and sensation in their respective churches.

Among the Wesleyans there have been recently two or three wonders, — some of which are too ridiculous to be noticed; but there is one which, from the notoriety and credit it has ob-

tained, — the manner with which public attention has been invited towards it, and the effect it has produced upon the religious feelings of their own body, is more especially deserving of examination.

"The History of an Entranced Female" is a narrative drawn up and attested by the Rev. R. Young, Wesleyan minister. This little work was sold by the accredited organ of the Wesleyan Book Committee and of the Conference, with their connivance, if not their permission; and so far the story received their indirect sanction. The circulation was immense. It reached a twenty-seventh edition; and the revelations of the prophetess were considered so important that the faith of whole Wesleyan congregations was in a state of warm excitement respecting them.

It was simply a case of hysteria, or natural Mesmerism, as a few words extracted from the narrative will show. The somnambulist "had *been very ill*, and was supposed to be *dying*." Here is the first point to be remembered. At last she fell into a trance. "In this state," Mr. Young says, "she appeared to die. But after lying, with no signs of life, save a little froth from the mouth and a slight warmth about the region of the heart, for nearly a week, she opened her eyes. *And now began her remarkable disclosures.*" It is unnecessary to examine these disclosures. There is no reason to suppose either trick or imagination in the transaction. It is a case of pure ignorance

on the part of the writer and of his Wesleyan supporters. Like the Holy Maid of Kent, and several Mesmerised patients, the "Entranced Female" was simply in a state of exaltation, moral and intellectual, and had clearer and more active perceptions than in her ordinary condition.*

We will now examine the no less memorable occurrences in the Roman Catholic community: these have produced an equal excitement, and have equally been referred to as proofs of the supernatural. It has long ago been observed, that in enthusiastic belief of the marvellous, the Wesleyans and Romanists are sister churches.†

We must first return to Mr. M'Neile, and give his views on the question; for strange to say, he has in some manner alighted on a certain portion of the truth, and seen the real connection between the artificial and the natural ecstasy. "This pretended science," says the sermon, "is precisely the thing that my Lord Shrewsbury has put forth, to prove that popery is the true version of Christianity. What is his Ecstatica which he has written such a book about? You have heard of the Ecstatica and Addolorata, — the two young women whom he saw on the Continent: they were

* See a clever useful little book in refutation of several of these absurdities, called "Modern Miracles condemned by Reason and Scripture," by Philo-Veritas. (Painter, 342. Strand.) Still the writer has not gone to the bottom of the subject, or understood the real cause of the phenomena.

† See Bishop Lavington's well-known and most useful work.

Mesmerised. His description of them *exactly corresponds* with the description we have of these Mesmerised persons. He tells us of a young woman, who was in a state of ecstasy, wrapt in prayer, devoted to the Virgin; — her eyes were open, but she had no natural sensibility of what was going on without. He says that "*a fly was seen to walk across her eyeball,* and she never winked; she was totally insensible of every thing that was going on, except one thing: he says, that she manifested consciousness at the approach of the consecrated host." "Now here is a state, pleaded by a popish writer as a proof of divine influence, as a proof of divine origin of his creed." "Now this belongs to the mystery of iniquity." — And so far the sermon. Now what Mr. M'Neile considered as Satanic, and my Lord Shrewsbury as divine in the above transactions, I must beg leave to reduce to a humbler character; and stripping the facts altogether of the marvellous, show to be merely an action of nature in a state of disease.

In that most delightful province of southern Germany, where the simple character of the inhabitants, and the ever-varying charms of mountain, valley, and torrent, would tempt the idle traveller to linger for weeks, two young girls have lately been the subject of much observation from the peculiar character and condition of their health. Those who have traversed that pic-

turesque route in the Tyrol, which leads from Brixen to Trent, want not to be reminded, how every nook and turn of the road swarms with the emblems of Roman Catholic worship. Superstition puts on its most persuasive form. Images of the Virgin, of the Saviour, — of the crucifixion with all its attendant accidents, stations for devotion, and hermitages, meet the eye of the passenger in uninterrupted succession. In no part of the Continent have I ever remarked so many of the externals of devotion as in the smiling vales of the Tyrol; and the primitive habits of its mountain peasantry have been strongly moulded under their influence. As Southey says in his Colloquies, "Religion may be *neglected*, but cannot be *forgotten* in Roman Catholic countries;" and the reader is requested to bear this observation in mind, as throwing light on certain phenomena, of which strong religious feelings were the source.

These two young girls, the Ecstatica of Caldaro, and the Addolorata of Capriana (as they are now termed) had both been subject to much ill health. The former "had had *various attacks of illness* during her early years." The Addolorata "had been attacked *with violent and complicated illness* about the age of seventeen." Both at last fell into a trance. Both became "Ecstatic." And in that state such singular phenomena exhibited themselves, the effect of an excited mind upon a

diseased habit of body, that the appearances were pronounced by the surrounding country to be miraculous. The priesthood at once took the cases under their protection; but there is no reason to believe that any imposture or trickery was superadded by them. They were as honest as they were ignorant. All they did was to magnify the importance of the facts, and to give the largest currency to the intelligence. Multitudes flocked from all quarters as on a pilgrimage. Amongst them came my Lord Shrewsbury and suite; and several Protestant gentlemen, who were all staggered by what they saw.

Lord Shrewsbury, believing the facts to be supernatural, published that account to which Mr. M'Neile referred; and from his little pamphlet, we will select the more prominent points. "We found her," says the Noble Lord, speaking of the Ecstatica, "in her usual state of ecstasy, — kneeling upon her bed, with her eyes uplifted, and her hands joined in the attitude of prayer as *motionless as a statue.* . . . . There was much of grace in her attitude." "Our first feeling was that of awe at finding ourselves in her presence." She appeared "motionless." "When in this state, she neither *sees nor hears:* all her senses are absorbed in the object of her contemplation; she is entranced; but it is neither the trance of death, nor the suspension of life, but a sort of supernatural existence, — dead in-

deed to this world, — but most feelingly alive to the other." "*She had not the least perception of our presence.*" "Her confessor by a slight *touch* or *word* caused her to fall back upon her pillow." "Her confessor proposed that he should awaken her entirely from her trance." "In an instant the most perfect animation was restored to her." "The circumstance which struck us, was the extreme facility with which her confessor transformed her from a state of perfect unconsciousness as to sensible objects to one of ordinary life." — "She has been known to remain for hours in this state," — "yet a *gentle touch* from her confessor, or any ecclesiastic with whom she is acquainted, is sufficient to dissolve the charm at once."

"A M. de la Bouillerie visited her on his way to Rome, and found her kneeling in a state of ecstasy, when he saw a fly walk quietly across the pupil of her eye, when wide open, without producing the slightest emotion."

The Addolorata was much the same. "She frequently lay entranced for a considerable time." "It was *under these circumstances* that during one night her whole head was encircled by small wounds." "Fourteen days after the crown of thorns, she received the stigmata in the hands and feet." "As a piece of deception," — says Lord Shrewsbury, "it is both morally and physically impossible." These are the main points in these two Roman Catholic miracles, with the addition

of what has already been mentioned, "the consciousness of the approach of the consecrated host."

"Now," says Lord Shrewsbury in conclusion, "the infidel may scoff at all this, but the designs of God are accomplished." There is, however, no inclination to scoff at the sincere opinions of any man, when it is said in reply, that these supposed miraculous appearances are the same in character, as what the Wesleyan and the Protestant maidens of the Cevennes and of Bohemia exhibited in their persons, due allowance being made for the differences of religion, and the various habits of mind and body; nay, they are much the same as what numerous spectators have witnessed in the house of Mr. Atkinson, and what I have seen occurring under my own roof.

These ecstatic cases, whether of artificial or natural somnambulism, would seem to be divided into two classes. Those in which a devotional attitude or a cataleptic state are developed, but where little or nothing of a predictive or conversational power appeared; and those, in which revelations and disclosures were the distinguishing characteristics.

The two girls in the Tyrol, Sister Germaine of Brazil, Anne Vials of St. Alban's, and Dr. Elliotson's patient, of whom he speaks in the "Zoïst," fall under the first class. The Holy Maid of Kent, the French and Bohemian Protestant dreamers, the entranced female among the Wesleyans, and

a young Mesmeric prophetess, of whom I shall speak presently, belong to the second division. Of course, there are intermediate shades of distinction and of connection; but there would appear to be some sort of mental or physical difference.

I have not a shadow of doubt, that if Mr. Atkinson had wished to found a religious sect, and, secluding Anne Vials from the world, had habituated her for years to conversation, and objects, and persons, and books of an exclusively religious character, and never permitted mundane transactions to be brought to her notice, either in her waking or sleeping state, that the most extraordinary effects might have been produced, and the most monstrous doctrines have been built up at his suggestion. He might have retreated with his ecstatic dreamer to some romantic vale, — startled the superstitious neighbourhood by her attitudes, her devotions, and her miraculous sufferings; and crowds would have flocked to witness the spectacle, and imbibe his creed; and gaping tourists might have perplexed their readers with lucubrations on the phenomena. But Mr. Atkinson is a philosopher and lover of truth: his habit is to illustrate, — to compare, — to explain; — with Bacon he delights in the "Interpretation of Nature," believing that "God hath fitted much for the comprehension of man's mind, if man *will open and dilate* the powers of his understanding as he

may." He knew, for instance, that Lord Shrewsbury's description of his Tyrolese maidens might answer word for word, to much that has occurred with poor Anne. The fact of a fly walking over the pupil of the eye, when wide open, which seemed such a proof of the miraculous to M. de la Bouillerie, has happened with her two or three times. The fly even once stopped and cleaned its wings on the eyeball. I once saw the end of a pocket-handkerchief placed gently on the pupil, and the lid neither winked nor moved at the touch. She was perfectly unconscious of the act.

In regard to the appearance of the stigmata and the small wounds on the head of the Addolorata, Dr. Elliotson and Mr. Atkinson both are of opinion, that they might be the effect of strong imagination and habitual contemplation upon a highly diseased frame: if that view be *trop fort* for some readers, I can say on the other hand, in spite of Lord Shrewsbury's assertion, that as "a piece of deception it is physically impossible," that I would have engaged repeatedly to have made the very same marks upon the head and hand of Anne Vials without any consciousness on her part: all Mesmerisers will confirm this declaration: at the same time, I see no reason to charge the Tyrolese priests with any artifice of the kind; the involuntary effect of imagination after a preconceived idea is so strong with some sickly sleep-waking females, that through the bare impression

of the mind, nature might throw out the external phenomenon.

In the Foreign Quarterly Review, No. LXIII. is an example taken from Lavergne's "De l'Agonie et de la Mort, sous le Rapport Physiologique, &c." which strongly illustrates the probability of this opinion, and shows the effect of *habitual thought upon the state of the body:* "At this moment there exists in a village of the department of the Var, of which Brignoles is the chief town, a woman possessed by divine love. Since her earliest infancy this woman professes the most ardent love for the Saviour; the passion *has always been her fixed idea,* the object of her aspirations and thoughts. She meditates and prays; and in her moments of ecstasy may have confided some of her visions to her friends. *When her prayer is at its height*" (in other words, when the ecstatic state is most fully developed) "a crown is seen to surround her forehead and the rest of her head, which looks as if it were opened by a regular tattooing, from each point in which a pure blood issues: the palms of her hands and the soles of her feet open spontaneously at the places where the nails of the punishment were inserted, her side offers the bleeding mark of a lance-thrust, and finally, a true cross of blood appears on her chest. Cotton cloths applied to these places, absorb the red mark.—This fact can be vouched for *by hundreds* in the country."

It may be desirable to add,—that Lord Shrewsbury, speaking of the Ecstatica, says that Görres, in his narrative of the case, relates that "so early as the autumn of the year 1833, her confessor observed, accidentally, that the part of the hands, where the wounds afterwards appeared *began to sink in*, as if under the pressure of some external body, and also that they became *painful* and frequently attacked by cramps. He conjectured from these appearances, that the stigmata" (i. e. the five wounds, like those of the Saviour, in the crucifixion)—"would eventually appear, and the result fulfilled his expectations. On the Purification, on the 2nd of February, 1834, he found her holding a cloth, with which, from time to time, she wiped her hands, frightened like a child at what she saw there. Perceiving blood upon the cloth, he asked her what it meant? These were the stigmata, which thenceforward continued upon her hands, and *shortly afterwards* made their appearance upon her feet, and to these, at the same time, was added the wound upon the heart."

Now, when the Earl of Shrewsbury, with a piety which commands our respect, says that he considers these stigmata, &c., "the most extraordinary objects in the world,"—it is necessary to remind him, that Görres mentions that "it is asserted by the directors of her conscience and by her curate, that *in her ecstasies* during the *last four years* she had been employed in contemplating the

life and *passion of Christ.* The most frequent object of her contemplations is the Passion of the Redeemer;—this produces the profoundest impression upon her, and is most vividly expressed upon her exterior. Particularly during the holy week, her whole being seems penetrated, and the images in her *soul act forcibly upon her frame.*"

Now, when we find that this poor girl had from her childhood evinced an ardent love of God and a pleasure in prayer,—that her visits to the Franciscan church had been unremitting, that her *bodily sufferings began even in her fifth year,* that she was often on the brink of the grave, that no remedies ameliorated her health, that the root of the disorder remained undiscovered, and that therefore she became in consequence still *more pious,* meditative, and constant in prayer,—the physiologist obtains a clue to the wonder. "In her eighteenth year she again fell seriously ill, and when, after a whole year's suffering, she inquired of the doctor if it were quite impossible for her to recover her health, and he answered—that he could only alleviate her pains, she replied that she would do for the future without medical advice,"—and would receive with submission what God would lay upon her. Here, then, we see a physical preparation for what the ecstasis, or somnambulistic condition, brought out. She lived for four years during her ecstatic state in the contemplation of the Passion of the Saviour;—

for more than four months before the appearance of the wounds, that part of the hands began *to sink in*, and became painful, — and the stigmata on the feet and heart did not occur till afterwards. In reading all this, — the result does not appear so very extraordinary: to use Görres's own expression, — "the images in her soul were acting forcibly upon her whole frame."

The history of the Addolorata shows the same preparation of mind and body for the same effect. "Domenica gave early indications of extraordinary piety. She was frequently found praying in the most secluded parts of the house. She received her first communion with singular devotion, — and had expressed an ardent desire to do so at an earlier period." "At the age of seventeen she was attacked with violent and complicated illness;" — "her sufferings were so great that her screams were often heard at a great distance;" "the holy communion alone relieved her, — after which she frequently lay entranced for a considerable time."

When the pamphlet mentions too, — that "under the very shadow of the large crucifix, which is *suspended over the head* of Maria Morl (the Ecstatica), the spirit of ecstasy is infused into her," and that "Domenica Lazari (the Addolorata) lies stretched upon her pallet *in face* of the representation of the death of the Saviour," though Lord Shrewsbury describes them as "two great and astounding miracles," — we see an additional as-

sistance to the action of the mind upon the body, — and uniting with Mesmerism to explain the matter.

Lord Shrewsbury mentions in a note the case of another Ecstatica, in whom the wounds appeared, — who had been "*very ill*," and "*contemplating the sufferings* of the Saviour, — and, moved by sympathy, had demanded to suffer with him." From all which occurrences, it would appear that this peculiar state is, after all, not so very extraordinary; for fifty other persons, similarly affected, are supposed to have existed in the Roman Catholic Church.

As to the consciousness of the Ecstatica, during her trance, of the approach of the consecrated host, though Mr. M'Neile thinks it an additional proof of the "mystery of iniquity," it is simply an instance of *clairvoyance*, which, though rejected at present as impossible by so many unbelievers, is so exceedingly common an occurrence, that shortly it will occasion no wonder whatsoever.

Of the second class of Ecstatic sleepwakers, who astonish their fellow-worshippers by the marvels they reveal, there is at this moment, in one of our midland counties, a Mesmeric prophetess, who is equally the cause of excitement and discussion.

A young girl, the daughter of Socialist parents, and brought up by them in an ignorance and unbelief of Scripture, had been Mesmerised on account of

her health. She had been Mesmerised by four different individuals, two of whom are friends of my own, without any remarkable effects of a mental character resulting. At last, she is Mesmerised by a gentleman of strong religious feelings, whose knowledge of Scripture is most profound and accurate, and whose theological tenets are somewhat peculiar. Religion is, in fact, the uppermost occupation of his mind; and mark the effect at once on the Socialist patient. She straightway becomes in her sleep most conversant with the Bible;—she compares one text with another;—she interprets the Old Testament by the New;—she discovers the deepest meaning in most abstruse chapters; she is an expositor of what she declares are the *real* doctrines of the Gospel. That a Socialist girl should accomplish all this, is regarded as supernatural; — she is considered as inspired,—called a prophetess;— and at present no one can say what turn the delusion may take. Now any one who has studied the science, may see, at a glance, that this is purely a case of Mesmeric sympathy; the patient is *reading the mind* of the Mesmeriser, and nothing else. There is no origination of idea, but a *transference of thought* to one whose intellectual powers are spiritualised by Mesmerism. That this explanation is correct, we have curious corroborative testimony. The girl is placed *en rapport*, that is, in Mesmeric communication, with a gentleman whose studies are

altogether of an astrological character; and her talk is straightway of the "stars."—She is placed *en rapport* with a lady, who declares that her innermost thoughts are laid bare by the patient; and both these parties know not what to think. Great hubbub is raised;—the neighbourhood is all stirred up; those who have a tendency towards religious novelties, look for fresh revelations from the magical maid; those who adhere to the Evangelical section of the Church, raise a bigoted cry of Satanic agency; while simple nature is forgotten, and both sides overlook the fact that the patient is sympathetically united with the mind of the Mesmerist.*

What opposite views, then, have these somnambulist revelations been required to support! In Kent, in the sixteenth century, they are brought in aid of the Church of Rome. In the seventeenth century, they have to do service for the Reformed Churches of France and Bohemia. And now in the present day, they are called up to strengthen the cause of good old John Wesley; while, if the preacher be the Protestant Pope of a fashionable watering-place, he deems an opposite line more expedient, and so adorns his rhetoric with plumage borrowed from St. Jude's at Liverpool.

* Of course, this supposed prophetess not only reads the mind of the Mesmeriser, but is farther gifted with that enlargement of the spiritual faculties, which is so usual in the Mesmeric state, and which gives the additional marvel to the whole transaction. It is this exaltation of soul that stamps her "revelations" with the semblance of the miraculous.

A propos of a fashionable congregation. A description has already been given of the effect of a Mesmeric wonder upon a superstitious peasantry and an ill-educated priesthood; it is regarded by both as a miracle. Let us now imagine how the very same marvels would ferment in the mind of a popular preacher nearer home; and see if a sketch cannot be suggested, the likeness of which might be recognised in many a place by those who reside close to the spot.

Suppose a preacher, — it matters not whether of the tractarian or opposite school, — but one who loves spiritual power so well that he can bear no brother near his throne. Suppose him to be a well-informed man, and entertaining decided opinions in favour of Mesmerism. Suppose him to have admitted this to a friend, and even to have stated to another person, that animal magnetism was a profound science, fraught with good to man, by no means necessarily connected with materialism, though man might pervert the best things to his ruin. Suppose him to have uttered something like this, — when in the midst of his convictions a few Mesmeric phenomena occur in the vicinity, and ruffle the smoothness of "life's dreary intercourse;" they, in fact, attract considerable notice. But a fashionable spa is not ripe for such a novelty. Our preacher's congregation find it far easier to combine the pomps and vanities of this world with sabbatical excitement,

than to see religion and science linked together in that happy union,

"qualem decet esse sororum."[i]

Does our imaginary teacher, then, rebuke their ignorance? does he set an example of manly independence? Alas! his pre-eminence is at stake. That most intolerable of tyrannies, — a tyranny in things spiritual must not be hazarded for a moment. He mounts his pulpit; he classes Mesmerism with astrology and witchcraft; he condemns its practice as a presumptuous prying into the secret hidden things of the Creator. As Bacon says, he "presumes to check the liberality of God's gifts;" — and he classes its healing benefits as one of the lying wonders of the latter days. And having thus seasoned his discourse with what Dr. Hooke calls "grandiloquent ignorance," he walks forth amidst his friends, triumphant and all-powerful, and receiving their congratulations at the proud position he retains.

Compare such a proceeding with the honest but mistaken views of a priest in the Tyrol. Yet the Roman Catholic is termed an impostor, and a fabricator of miracles; the other is upheld and admired as a supporter of truth!

To return, however, to the question of mental and Mesmeric sympathy, there can be little doubt that the modern miracles in Egypt, which Lord Prudhoe witnessed, and which have so perplexed

the learned of this country to explain, have some connection with this "transfer of thought," of which we have been speaking. Dr. Collyer has written an able work on this subject; he supposes * that a vital electricity is the medium of communication from *mind* to *mind;* that there is an "embodiment of thought;" in other words, an impression of the thoughts of one mind, through a Mesmeric agent, on the brain or mind of another. By this very embodiment of thought the young prophetess reads the mind of her Mesmeriser, and transfers his Scriptural acquirements into her own brain; and by the same embodiment the Arabian boy became acquainted with the likenesses of Nelson, of Shakspeare, and of the brother of Major Felix, and so perplexed the noble traveller and his numerous critics.*

In short, we are but in the infancy of our Mesmeric knowledge. Not only may the oracles of old, those for instance of Delphi, be explained by the responses of a magnetic somnambulist in the highest state of lucidity — not only may many startling wonderments in the Church of Rome be likened to some in the Wesleyan community, and be farther illustrated by the ecstatic condition of a Mesmerised patient; but it may even be suggested to the philosophic inquirer to pursue the

* See "Psychography, or the Embodiment of Thought," by Dr. Collyer. — See also "The People's Phrenological Journal," No. XLIV.

topic into a wider field. It may be possible that the sympathy of Mesmeric action may throw a light on the hysteric excitement, by which large multitudes of men are stirred up into a strange contagious enthusiasm. Dr. Bertrand, in his well-known work, contends strongly for this opinion. The prophets of the Cevennes,—the nuns of London, the convulsionaires of St. Medard, are cited by him as instances of proof. We might add to this list the strange sect of the Flagellants of Hungary and Bohemia, in the fifteenth century. L'Enfant, in the "History of the Council of Constance," gives a curious account of this heresy; and states that this love of self-flagellation became a perfect "furor," and so contagious was it, that some contemporaries deemed it as "supernatural, and the inspiration of Heaven;"—others "regarded it as the suggestion of an evil spirit."* The enthusiasm of the quakers at their first establishment,—of the methodists in their early days,—and in our own time the wildness and madness of the "unknown tongues," may all fall under the same class. A panic on board a ship, excitement in the field of battle, applause in a crowded theatre, make some approach to the same cha-

* This is so exactly a counterpart of what occurs at every other strange appearance, that the words should be quoted:—

"Elle avait un air surnaturel qui faisait juger aux uns que c' était une inspiration du ciel, pendant que les autres la regardoient comme une suggestion du mauvais Esprit."—*Histoire du Concile de Constance*, liv. v.

racter. And when in these and similar cases we add the principle of imitation to the contagious influence of Mesmeric power,— we catch a clue that unravels much that is mysterious in the conduct of man; we see how intimately we are all united, physically as well as morally; sympathy and the force of attraction are called into being where it is little suspected,

"Striking the *electric chain* wherewith we are darkly bound"

one with another!

The task to which I have so anxiously devoted myself, is now completed; and my readers must judge with what success.

I have endeavoured to show that there is in Mesmerism the existence of a power which, if properly directed and controlled, may be found eminently serviceable in increasing the happiness of human kind.

I have endeavoured to prove this position by numerous instances confirmed by observation and experiment.

I have respectfully invited the attention of the medical world to a philosophic consideration of the uses of this power.

I have shown that the vague charge of Satanic action is one which has been renewed at every

fresh and mysterious discovery,—that it is a charge, too, which often proceeds less from the grossest ignorance than the interested motives of the inventor.

I have endeavoured to prove that our knowledge of Mesmerism does, in no degree, affect our belief in real miracles, and in the doctrines of Scripture, though it may throw light upon many of those secrets respecting the relationship of mind and matter, which have hitherto appeared miraculous or perplexing, according as the priest or philosopher have respectively regarded them.

And now nothing remains but to congratulate the friends of truth, at the marked and steady progress that the great cause is making. The adversaries may be numerous and influential,—but their number is diminishing daily. The established leaders of the medical profession, who have fixed the principles of their practice, and desire no disturbance in their views from the detection of a fresh and unknown law in nature;—the accredited leaders of the Evangelical clergy, whose unfortunate love of popularity and power tempts them to uphold their otherwise well-deserved eminence by fanatical denunciations of the first object that perplexes them;—every weak and nervous woman, who deems it one of the privileges of the sex to surrender her reasoning faculties into the guidance of some favourite and spiritual adviser;—and, lastly, the large portion of the public that hates to think

for itself,—that loathes every thing which is new,—that calls reformation revolution,—and prefers a vapid uniformity of existence, to the animating pleasures of knowledge and discovery; these are the opponents of Mesmerism; and with these any controversy is worse than useless. How cheering is the opposite side of the picture! The friends of the art are those of whom any cause might be proud. Men of science,—men of philosophy,—men whose benevolence is as wide and practical as their intellects are clear and commanding; these are our guides and champions in this glorious field of Christian usefulness, and under their banners a day of complete success cannot be far distant. But they are not merely a few select and leading minds that rank among its advocates; large bodies of men are taking up the question. It is a fact that a numerous portion of the junior members of the medical profession are alive to the truths of Mesmerism, and only biding their time till the ripened mind of the public gives them a signal for its more general adoption. It is a fact that very many individuals among the younger portion of the clergy, are conscious of the medicinal value of the science, and are introducing its practice as one of their means of parochial usefulness. Nay, the two extremes of the great social pyramid are both exerting their energies in the same direction. Mechanics' Institutes are taking the subject up; and many of the operatives in the North and in

the manufacturing towns have experienced a sense of its domestic benefit. But it is among our *haute noblesse* itself that the strongest division of supporters may perhaps be found. Some of the leading members of the aristocracy are practising the art for the benefit of their poorer brethren; and very many are giving to the subject a patient and anxious investigation. It is indeed one of the most favourable signs of the times—in spite of the fearful storms that seem to cloud the social horizon—this growing disposition on the part of all ranks of the community to devote themselves most extensively to the useful and to the instructive. There is perhaps at this moment no single department of science or general literature which cannot boast amongst its followers one or two most accomplished members from out of the circle of the British aristocracy. And Mesmerism is no exception to the progressive character of their studies. In short, as Mr. Chenevix said a few years back, MESMERISM IS ESTABLISHED. Nothing but a general convulsion of society—a loss of the art of printing, and a return to the barbarous condition of those of old, can, humanly speaking, roll back that current of knowledge on the subject which is growing and expanding every year. Soon, very soon, will it be an acknowledged—an admitted branch of medical practice. And when that day shall at length arrive—when the mists of prejudice and bigotry shall be dispersed before the

glowing splendours of the Sun of truth, and men shall look back in wonder at that hardened incredulity which checked its onward progress—let it never be forgotten who it was that in this country first placed the question on its legitimate footing,—who it was that first took the practice out of the hands of the charlatan, and added its multiplied and profound resources to the former stores of the healing art,—who it was that, risking the loss of friends, the loss of income, the loss of elevated standing in his own profession, stepped out manfully and truthfully from the timid crowd, and asserted the claims of this great discovery to a place within the circle of the medical sciences: and when the question is asked who it was that so boldly ventured on this untrodden ground, a grateful posterity will respond with the name of JOHN ELLIOTSON. But it will also be added, that he lived to see his calumniated art acknowledged and pursued; that he lived to see the stream of professional success flowing back to him with the full tide of popular support; that he lived to see every statement which he had advanced, every treatment which he had adopted, established and confirmed; and that as one of the first physicians of the age, first in practice, and first in reputation, he was classed with the proudest names of that honourable band,

"Qui sui memores fecêre merendo."

APPENDIX.

An ably written article in the "Critic" for February, 1844, says, — "We have no hesitation in asserting as the result of accurate experiment, that there *is a state* of *human existence*, in which the mind perceives external objects through *some other medium than the wonted media of the senses*, and that in this state the mind perceives things imperceptible in its natural condition." Startling as this position is, — there is no escaping from the fact. Long before Mesmer appeared, or Mesmerism was practised, — have such facts been stated on the most unquestionable authority. What is the manner, by which these effects are produced, is another and difficult question, — for the solution of which, in the present state of knowledge, — we are little prepared. Whether it be, as the writer in the "Critic" suggests, "by a sixth sense of which in our ordinary condition of existence we are not conscious, and which is developed only under certain circumstances;" — or whether, "by an extraordinary quickening of the senses, so that they catch sights and sounds invisible and inaudible to us;" — whether, "by the partial severance of the immaterial mind from its material tenements, and its perception of things directly without the intervention of those senses through which only it is usually permitted to hold intercourse with the material world;"

or whether it be "by a mysterious or unexplained sympathy;" whatever be the hypothesis, — the fact is certain, and cannot admit of contradiction. The useful point, however, to be borne in mind, is this, — that these phenomena have occurred *without* the action of animal magnetism. In a useful little work by Mr. Edwin Lee on Clairvoyance *, — which, all who are interested on the subject should read, — there is a quotation from a German work on practical religion, which is corroborative of the opinion. "Nevertheless, it is not to be denied that we are but learners in our investigations into the secrets of nature, and that what appears to us to be incomprehensible, is not, on that account, to be denied altogether. We now know, for instance, that the human soul, which employs for its instrument as regards earthly things the nervous system more particularly, can also feel and perceive beyond the sphere of the nerves. We know that in certain conditions of nervous disorder, man may possess *increased powers*, may perceive distant things, which are separated from him by an interval of many miles. We know that in some states of the nervous system, persons can see with firmly closed eyes, — can hear with closed ears. We *have examples of this in somnambulists* (natural sleep-walkers) — *who during the complete sleep of their bodies, perform things which in their waking state they were unable to accomplish.* Thus, herein shows itself very clearly an activity of the human soul altogether independent of its outward senses. But, in

* "Report on the Phenomena of Clairvoyance," by Edwin Lee, Esq. (Churchill, Prince's St., Soho.)

point of fact, it *is not the eyes which see, nor the ears which hear;* it is the soul which sees, hears, and perceives *by means of the nerves*, which are distributed over the whole surface of the body, and the powers of which are almost *redoubled* in the apparatus of the senses, smell, feeling," &c.

A few instances of Clairvoyance, occurring spontaneously in a natural state, shall be here adduced in confirmation of the above statement. The case of Somnambulism, which is reported on the authority of the Archbishop of Bordeaux was alluded to in the Third Chapter. Here the young ecclesiastic wrote and read with his eyes closed, and when an opaque body was interposed by the archbishop between them and the paper.

Here is a case of hysteria, with extraordinary acuteness of some of the senses. It was communicated by Sir G. S. Mackenzie, Bart. to the Editor of the Edinburgh Phrenological Journal: —

"Dear Sir,

"The following copy of a letter from a clergyman was sent to me nearly six years ago, *at a time when Mesmerism had not attracted my notice.* The case referred to in it was evidently one of *natural sleep-walking;* and it is to be regretted that so little of it is known, as it appears to have been one of great interest. Now that the subject is better and more generally understood, we may hope that such cases when they occur, will not be concealed.

"Yours faithfully,

"24th October, 1843 G. S. Mackenzie."

"'24th January, 1838.

"'Dear Sir,

"'It is perfectly true that our poor friend, who has now been some months with us, presents one of those singular and almost incredible cases of hysterical or nervous affection which are at distant intervals witnessed under the dispensation of the Almighty.

"'The overthrow of the regular functions of the nervous system was occasioned by the almost sudden death of her father, to whom she was most fondly attached, who was seized with illness during her absence from him, and died a few hours after she returned to her home. I cannot enter into any longer details of the case, which has been attended with all those varieties which have long characterised the complaint, among medical men, as the Protean disorder. The extraordinary powers communicated to *the other senses by the temporary suspension of one or two of them*, are beyond credibility to all those who do not witness it; and I really seldom enter into any of the details, because it would be but reasonable that those who have not seen should doubt the reality of them. All colours she can distinguish with the greatest correctness by night or day, whether presented to her on cloth, silk, muslin, wax, or even glass — and this, I may safely say, as easily on any part of the body as with the hands, although, of course, the ordinary routine of such an exhibition of power takes place with the hands, the other being that of mere curiosity. Her delicacy of mind and high tone of religious feeling are such, that she has the greatest objection to make that which she regards in the light

of a heavy affliction from God, a matter of show or curiosity to others, although to ourselves, of course, all these unusual extravagances of nervous sensibility are manifest for at least twelve out of every twenty-four hours. She can not only read with the greatest rapidity any writing or print that is legible to us, music, &c., with the mere passage of her fingers over it, whether in a dark or light room (for her *sight* is for the most part suspended when under the influence of the attack or paroxysm, although she is perfectly *sensible*, nay, more *acute* and *clever* than in her natural state); but, within this month past, she has been able to collect the contents of any printing or MS. by merely laying her hand on the page, without *tracing* the lines or letters; and I saw her, last night only, declare the contents of a note just brought into the room, in this way (when I could not decipher it myself without a candle), and with a rapidity with which I could not have read it by daylight. I have seen her develop hand-writing by the application of a note to the back of her hand, neck, or foot; and she can do it at any time. There is nothing *un*natural in this; for, of course, the nervous susceptibility extends all over the surface of the body, but use and habit cause us to limit its power more to the fingers. Many, even medical, men take upon themselves to declare that *we* are all (her medical attendants as well) under a mere delusion. We ask none to believe any thing if they prefer not to do so, and only reply — The case is equally marvellous either way; either that this our poor patient should be thus afflicted, or that eighteen or nineteen persons of my family and friends, in the daily habit of seeing her, should fancy she is, for every

twelve hours out of twenty-four, doing, at intervals, that which she is *not* doing. There are many exhibitions of extravagant powers which she possesses, that we talk of to no one; for, finding it difficult to acquire credit for lesser things, we do not venture on the greater. *Her power ceases the moment the attack passes off.* A considerable swelling has at times been visible at the back of the head, which has yielded to the treatment.

"'It is certainly a case which would be an instructive one in the consideration of the physiology of the human frame; but she, poor thing! is most averse to experiments being purposely made on her: but in her every-day life among us, we have no lack of proof for all we believe and *know*.

"'Between the attacks she is as perfectly in a *natural* state as ever she was in her life. There is but one *paradox* in her state, and that is, that she can at such times hear *some* sounds and not *others*, though very much louder,—and see some things and not others, though placed before her. She could hear a tune whistled, when she would not hear a gun fired close to her. It is certainly the absorption or absence of mind that occasions this: *absent* to some things, though *present* to others, like *any* absent man; and thus Dr. Y—— accounts for it.

"'In making this communication to you, in part to vindicate the testimony of my friend Mr. M——, I have really exceeded my usual custom and resolution; for I do not think it fair to the poor sufferer herself to make her too much the talk of others. Very few believe what we tell them, and, therefore, we are in no degree anxious to open our lips on the subject.

All I know is, that I should not have believed it myself, had I been only *told* of it. I must beg, therefore, that you will not make any undue use of this communication, by handing my letter about to any one. The friend for whom you ask the information is perfectly welcome to read it, or I should not have written it. If the case were my own, the world should be welcome to it; but a young female of much sensibility might be much embarrassed, by finding the world at large in possession of all particulars on her recovery, should God so please to permit.

"'I am, &c."'

Mr. Colquhoun, in the "Isis Revelata," has collected several similar cases.

One is the case of a boy, named Divaud, residing at Vevey. The Philosophical Society of Lausanne examined into this case, and reported the facts. The committee testify, that the boy read, *when his eyes were perfectly shut;* — that he wrote accurately; "*though we put a thick piece of paper before his eyes,* he continued to form each character with the same distinctness as before." "He has told the title of a book, when there was a thick plank placed between it and his eyes." Many other singular circumstances are narrated of this natural somnambulist.

Another instance of clairvoyance, is that of a student, who, during a severe nervous complaint, experienced several attacks of somnambulism. Professor Feder of Göttingen is the authority for this case. Several facts are given, from which it is evident that this

somnambulist saw distinctly without the use of his eyes.

The "Transactions of the Medical Society of Breslau" mention the case of a ropemaker, who was frequently overtaken by sleep, — whose eyes were then firmly closed, and in this state he would continue his work with as great case as when awake. But this somnambulist "could *not see when his eyes were forced open.*"

Dr. Knoll gives the example of a gardener, who became a somnambulist, and in that state performed a variety of occupations, requiring light and the use of the eyes, with which he dispensed. Among other things, he *put the thread through the eye of a needle,* and sewed his clothes.

Lord Monboddo has recorded a curious case of somnambulism, in which a girl in his neighbourhood performed a variety of acts *with her eyes shut.*

Dr. Schultz of Hamburgh mentions a patient, who wrote, and distinguished colours, and recognised the numbers of cards, and cut figures in paper, with her eyes fast closed. "In order to *be certain,* that upon these occasions she made no use of her eyes, they were bandaged upon the approach of the convulsions which preceded the somnambulism."

Moritz's "Psychological Magazine" gives an account of a boy, who frequently fell asleep suddenly; and although his eyes were completely closed, was *able to see* and discriminate *all objects* presented to him.

Dr. Abercrombie in his "Intellectual Powers," and Dr. Dyce of Aberdeen, in the "Edinburgh Philosophical Transactions," have described cases of a very

similar character ; but they have been so often quoted, and are so familiar to the reader, that further reference is unnecessary.

Those who are anxious to pursue the subject, should consult the " Isis Revelata," in which these cases are more fully detailed.

Many other instances might be adduced, all illustrative of this often-repeated statement, that Mesmeric phenomena are nothing else than what nature of her own accord has produced in the cases of the common somnambulist.

Let but the reader bear this fact in mind, and surely his incredulity as to the wonders of Mesmerism might receive considerable abatement.

The additional point is, that when this somnambulistic condition is artificially obtained, a sympathetic and curative influence is often induced, conducting the philosopher to a fresh region of physiological inquiry.

In short, man does not live for himself alone. Man must be reared by man ; must be taught by man ; must be comforted and healed by man. We are all necessary the one to the other ; we are all formed from the same clay, and are hastening to the same end; —and while our sojourn continues on this earth, are all intimately identified with each other's happiness. As that wild, but powerful writer Thomas Carlyle, — in one of the wildest and most powerful of his writings, — " The French Revolution," — speaking on the very subject of this work, says : " And so under the strangest new vesture, the *old great truth* begins again to be revealed, — that man is what we call a miraculous

creature, *with miraculous power over men;* and on the whole, with such a life in him, and such a world round him, as victorious Analysis, with her physiologies, nervous systems, physic and metaphysic, will never completely name; to *say nothing of explaining.*"

THE END.

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